

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	5 APRIL 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	ALL
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council recently undertook community involvement on Issues and Options for the Local Plan, which is the first stage in replacing Reading's current development plan documents with a new comprehensive Local Plan. The Issues and Options for the Local Plan was approved by Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 24th November 2015 (Minute 22 refers).
- 1.2 Community involvement lasted from 22nd January to 7th March 2016. This report briefly summarises the headline results of community involvement.
- 1.3 The report also seeks approval for amending the Local Development Scheme, which is the document setting out the programme for producing new planning policies. This is mainly to revise the timetable for the next stages of the Local Plan.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the summary of the responses received as a result of community involvement on the Issues and Options for the Local Plan be noted.
- 2.2 That the Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1) be approved and brought into effect, and that it form the basis for production of planning policy, with effect from 6 April 2016.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Local Plan sets out the planning policies for an area and is the main consideration in deciding planning applications. The local plan for Reading, previously referred to as the Local Development Framework, currently consists of three documents - the Core Strategy (adopted 2008), Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP, adopted 2009) and Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted 2012). The Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document were subject to an amendment relating to affordable housing policies in January 2015.
- 3.2 There is now a need to review the Local Plan. The need to review the local plan as a single, comprehensive document was identified in a Local Development Scheme, which is the programme for producing planning policy documents, the latest version of which was agreed by this Committee on 25th November 2014 (Minute 17 refers).

4. THE PROPOSAL

(a) Current Position

- 4.1 The first stage of preparing the new local plan as set out in the Local Development Scheme is consultation on Issues and Options. This takes the form of a discussion paper based around a series of questions. Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee approved the Issues and Options for the Local Plan and associated documents for community involvement on 24th November 2015 (Minute 22 refers).
- 4.2 Community involvement started on Friday 22nd January and ended on Monday 7th March. The process involved the following:
 - A direct e-mail to over 800 contacts on the Council's planning consultation list, comprising interested individuals, businesses, community and voluntary organisations and other local authorities and public bodies;
 - Publication of all documents, including a summary leaflet, on the website;

- A press release, which led to a series of Local Plan articles on GetReading.co.uk;
- Summary leaflets distributed to Reading Borough libraries;
- Four interactive workshops involving activities around the main issues, as follows:
 - Tilehurst Village Hall, Thursday 4th February, 7:30 pm
 - Reading Town Hall (business workshop only), Thursday 11th February, 8:30 am
 - Church House, Caversham, Tuesday 16th February, 7:00 pm
 - Civic Offices, Wednesday 24th February, 7:00 pm
- Three drop-in events where officers were on hand to answer questions and discuss the main issues, as follows:
 - Civic Offices, Monday 15th February, 2:00 - 7:00 pm
 - Civic Offices, Tuesday 16th February, 1:00 - 6:00 pm
 - St Paul's Church Hall, Whitley Wood, Friday 19th February, 1:30 - 6:30 pm

4.3 The Issues and Options was published later than set out in the latest version of the Local Development Scheme. This stage was timetabled for September 2015. The timetable slipped mainly because the Council was working with its neighbours¹ on producing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which assesses the need for new housing in the area up to 2036. This study was completed somewhat later than initially envisaged, with the final document only published on 24th February 2016, although the key results have been available on the Council's website since October 2015. Since the amount of housing needed is such a critical issue for the local plan, it would not have been appropriate to proceed with consultation without the results. More detail on the SHMA is included in the report to this Committee on the 24th November, and the SHMA itself is available on the Council's website².

4.4 The outcome of the consultation is set out below.

4.5 The Council received around 200 written responses to the Local Plan. These responses came from a mix of individuals, community groups, landowners and developers and other local authorities and public sector organisations. Officers have not yet completed the process of going through all comments and assessing the detail of them, so this report summarises the main issues in very general terms only.

- Generally, there was support for trying to accommodate the full objectively assessed need for housing from the development industry and adjoining authorities.
- In terms of sites suggested for development, the sites that generated the largest volume of responses, mostly opposed to development,

¹ West Berkshire Council, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

² www.reading.gov.uk/readingldf

were Allotments and adjacent land, Kentwood Hill (A14), Part of Reading Golf Course (A19) and continuation of the existing allocation at Park Lane Primary School, the Laurels and Downing Road (B46).

- Many developers and landowners that had suggested their sites for development supported the identification of the site, often with additional information.
- Some landowners and developers sought to advocate new sites not included in the consultation document. These were:
 - The Butler PH, Chatham Street
 - Land west of Bridgewater Close
 - 2-4 Deacon Way
- Some landowners and developers also advocated other sites located just outside Reading's boundary, around Grazeley in Wokingham Borough, and around the edges of Caversham and Emmer Green in South Oxfordshire District, as being potential locations to help meet Reading's needs.
- A number of responses were in relation to identification of sites as local green space. The sites most frequently listed were:
 - Allotments at Kentwood Hill/Victoria Recreation Ground (57 responses)
 - Mapledurham Playing Field (39)
 - Tilehurst Triangle (including land at Walnut Way) (25)
 - Downing Road Playing Field (21)
 - Chapel Hill allotments (13)
- A number of in-depth responses to the issue of how Reading should plan for the historic environment were received. These also cover some matters with implications beyond the Local Plan process. The following were the main issues raised:
 - Completing conservation area appraisals, developing action plans and adding new or extended conservation areas;
 - Further use of article 4 directions;
 - Improving the use of the list of locally important buildings;
 - Surveying grade II listed buildings at risk;
 - Better communication and marketing of the historic environment; including better access to online resources;
 - Undertaking a Reading river views study;
 - Giving more resources to heritage, in terms of officers, elected members and empowering communities; and
 - Finalising Heritage Statement.

4.6 Attendance at the consultation events was mixed. The number of attendees at the public workshops were as follows:

- Tilehurst Village Hall - 20 attendees
- Church House, Caversham - 13 attendees
- Civic Offices - 5 attendees

In addition, there were 20 attendees at the business workshop. These numbers are similar to the attendances at previous workshops as part of planning policy consultations.

4.7 The public workshops revolved around three exercises: identifying the main issues; looking at types of housing site; and identifying important local green spaces. Full results of these workshops will form part of a future report of consultation.

4.8 The drop-in events were less well-attended than they have been in the past. It is likely that increasing use of the website to access information means that fewer people feel the need to come to such events in person.

(b) Option Proposed

4.9 Committee is recommended to note the broad outcome of the consultation on the Issues and Options for the Local Plan set out in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.8. A full report of the consultation will be prepared in due course, which will include summaries of each comment received and each consultation event undertaken. The summaries of individual comments will need to be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee to approve the Council's response to them. This is likely to happen at the same time as approval of the draft local plan.

4.10 Committee is further recommended to approve amendments to the Local Development Scheme to set out the timetable for the next stages of the Local Plan. The suggested amendments are set out in Appendix 1, but they mainly involve amendments to the timetable for the local plan to reflect the delay in consulting on Issues and Options.

(c) Other Options Considered

4.11 There is one alternative option that could be considered, which is to proceed with the existing (2014) Local Development Scheme. However, the timescales in that LDS for local plan production are no longer achievable, and not producing a new version would not give clarity about future timescales.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Local Plan, through setting out the way Reading will develop to 2036, will contribute to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2015-18:

- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
- Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living;
- Providing homes for those in most need;
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active;
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy;
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Consultation took place in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which was adopted in March 2014. It involved a number of the tools that the SCI suggests are appropriate for this type of consultation, and also, in line with that document, avoided consulting over the Christmas period.

7. EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options incorporates the requirement to carry out a screening stage of an Equality Impact Assessment. This is incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal document. Depending on which options are taken forward to the draft plan, a full Equality Impact Assessment could be required. This would be reported at a future meeting.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Regulation 18 (3) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 state that the local planning authority must take into account any representation made in response to the Issues and Options consultation.
- 8.2 The content of Local Development Schemes is specified in Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by Section 180 of the Planning Act 2008 and Section 111 of the Localism Act 2011. Under the legislation, the LDS must list the development plan documents to be produced, set out their subject matter, geographical area and timescales, and which are to be prepared jointly.
- 8.3 The LDS has also had regard to the legislation on the process of production of the individual documents it lists, which is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2008 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Production of the local plan will generally be carried out within existing budgets, and this will largely be the case with the documents listed in the LDS. However, there are some elements of producing the plan that can have significant resource implications, depending on how they are carried out.
- 9.2 Consultation exercises can be resource intensive, particularly at early stages where the focus is on engaging as many people as possible, and on asking wide-ranging and open-ended questions. However, the Council's consultation process is based mainly on electronic communication, which helps to minimise resource costs.

- 9.3 Another main area where there can be significant financial implications is in producing the evidence base, particularly where the use of external consultants is required. Some external consultants will be needed when considering matters such as retail and economic need and flood risk. Consultants will only be used where they genuinely represent the best option in terms of value for money.
- 9.4 Finally, the other significant cost is a public examination, which will be required for the Local Plan. These examinations can cost tens of thousands of pounds. They are an inescapable fact of producing development plans, although the length and scope of these examinations can be minimised by seeking to resolve objections before the examination, as well as by combining documents into one document with one examination, as is proposed with the Local Plan.
- 9.5 It is expected that the costs above existing budgets will be associated with the examination in 2017-18 or 2018-19 (depending on exact dates) which may mean a budget pressure of £20-30,000.

Value for Money (VFM)

- 9.6 The preparation of a local plan will ensure that developments are appropriate to their area, that significant effects are mitigated, that contributions are made to local infrastructure, and that there are no significant environmental, social and economic effects. Robust policies will also reduce the likelihood of planning by appeal, which can result in the Council losing control over the form of some development, as well as significant financial implications. Production of the local plan, in line with legislation, national policy and best practice, therefore represents good value for money.

Risk Assessment

- 9.7 There are no direct financial risks associated with the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 15)
- Localism Act 2011 (Section 111)
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Issues and Options for the Local Plan, November 2015
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan Issues and Options, November 2015
- Local Development Scheme 2014
- Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, October 2015

APPENDIX 1: DRAFT REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2016 (SHOWING TRACKED CHANGES)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Local Development Scheme is a document that sets out a local planning authority's programme for producing planning policy documents. Local planning authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by part 111 of the Localism Act 2011. This is a document setting out which planning policy documents the authority will be producing and when. The LDS should state:
- (a) the local development documents that will be produced;
 - (b) the subject matter and geographical area to which each document is to relate;
 - (c) which documents are to have 'development plan' status;
 - (d) which documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
 - (e) any matter or area where there is, or is likely to be, a joint committee;
 - (f) the timetable for the preparation and revision of the documents
- 1.2 This LDS therefore sets out the planning policy documents that Reading Borough Council intends to produce over the coming years, what and where they will cover and when they will be produced. Planning policy documents, known as Local Development Documents (LDDs) fall into three categories:
- **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** that have been subject to independent testing and have the weight of development plan status;
 - **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**, which are not subject to independent testing and do not have development plan status; and
 - **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**; this sets out how the Council intends to achieve effective community involvement in the preparation of local development documents for the Borough.
- 1.3 The Council ~~previously produced a number of previous Local Development Schemes, in 2005, 2007 and 2011. These set out the programmes for preparing the Local Development Framework, much of which has now been adopted. However, a number of recent changes meant that an entirely new LDS was needed:~~
- ~~• Most of the documents detailed in the 2005-2011 LDSs have now been prepared and adopted (see section 2);~~
 - ~~• The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been produced, which combines national planning guidance into one document, and contains a number of important policy shifts;~~

- ~~There is now an assumption that, in most cases, local planning authorities will produce a single Local Plan as opposed to a number of separate documents within the Local Development Framework;~~
- ~~Formal joint arrangements for minerals and waste planning in Berkshire have now ended, and it is for individual authorities to produce their own documents.~~

~~1.4~~ ~~Therefore produced~~ a new version of the LDS ~~was produced~~ in July 2013 ~~(and subsequently revised in November 2013~~ and again in November 2014), which detailed the production of a single Local Plan. However, delays to the production of a key evidence document as well as reductions in available resources have meant the need to revise some of the timescales.

1.54 Section 2 summarises the documents that have been adopted and which contain the current planning policy framework for Reading. This includes documents that cover a wider area than just Reading Borough.

1.65 Section 3 summarises the programme for production of new planning policy documents. The main document will be a Local Plan. In line with the Government's preference, this will be a single document rather than the set of different documents that currently exist (Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document). ~~This will be supported by further progress on the Community Infrastructure Levy.~~ There will also be continued production of Supplementary Planning Documents. More detail on these documents is included in Appendix 1 (for the Local Plan) and Appendix 2 (for other documents).

2. EXISTING PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS

2.1 A number of planning policy documents were already adopted and in operation at the time of this LDS. Not all of these documents relate only to Reading Borough or were prepared by Reading Borough Council. In some cases, some of these documents are only partially still in operation, and Table 1 below notes where this is the case.

2.2 Table 1 below summarises the documents that are already in place and are used in decisions on planning applications.

Table 1: Current Planning Policy Documents

Document Title	Adoption Date	End Year	Policy Lineage
'Development Plan' Status			
South East Plan (one retained policy ¹)	May 2009	2026	N/A
Core Strategy	Jan 2008, amended Jan 2015	2026	N/A
Reading Central Area Action Plan	Jan 2009	2026	N/A
Sites and Detailed Policies Document	Oct 2012 Amended Jan 2015	2026	N/A
Proposals Map	Oct 2012	2026	N/A
Replacement Minerals Local Plan (Saved Policies ²)	May 2001	Not specified	N/A
Waste Local Plan (Saved Policies ³)	Dec 1998	2006	N/A
Supplementary Planning Document Status			
Affordable Housing	July 2013	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
Battle Hospital Planning Brief	Apr 2005	Not specified	SDPD
Caversham Lock Area Development Principles	Mar 2006	Not specified	RCAAP
Chatham Street Development Brief	Dec 2002	Not specified	RCAAP
Dee Park Planning Brief	Dec 2008	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
Design Guide to House Extensions	May 2003	Not specified	SDPD
Elvian School Planning and Development Brief	Feb 2011	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
Employment, Skills and Training	Apr 2013	Not specified	Core Strategy
Kenavon Drive Urban Design Concept Statement	Jul 2004	Not specified	RCAAP
Meadway Centre Planning Brief	Nov 2013	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
Parking Standards and Design	Oct 2011	Not specified	Core Strategy
Reading Station Area Framework	Dec 2010	Not specified	RCAAP
Residential Conversions	Nov 2013	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
Revised Planning Obligations under Section 106	Nov 2013 Apr 2015	Not specified	Core Strategy, SDPD
South West Reading Planning Brief	Apr 2000	Not specified	
Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief	Mar 2007	Not specified	RCAAP
Sustainable Design and Construction	Jul 2011	Not specified	Core Strategy

¹ Policy NRM6: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

² The saved policies in the Replacement Minerals Local Plan are: 1, 2, 2A, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29

³ The saved policies in the Waste Local Plan are: WLP1, 3, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, and 34

<i>Other Documents</i>			
Statement of Community Involvement	March 2014	Not specified	N/A
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	September 2014	Not specified	N/A
<u>Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule</u>	<u>Jan 2015</u>	<u>Not specified</u>	<u>Core Strategy, SDPD, RCAAP</u>

3. PROGRAMME FOR PRODUCING PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS

3.1 This section sets out the programme for the planning policy documents that the Council expects to produce, and the timescales and processes for production. Table 2 below summarises the documents to be produced and when they are anticipated to be finalised. More details on each document, including those aspects specified in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) are set out in Appendices 1 (for the Local Plan) and 2 (for other documents).

Table 2: Summary Programme for Producing Planning Policy Documents

Document Title	Planned Consultation(s)	Expected Adoption Date	Policy Lineage
<i>'Development Plan' Status</i>			
Affordable Housing policies	Completed	March 2015	National policy
Local Plan	Autumn 2015 July/Aug 2016 Nov/Dec 2016 Jan/Feb 2017 Aug/Sep 2017	Oct Sep 2017-2018	National policy
<i>Supplementary Planning Document Status</i>			
Site Specific Section 106 SPD	Completed	Mar 2015	Core Strategy, SDPD
Sites in West Side of Central Reading Development Brief(s)	Nov 2015-2016	Mar 2016-2017	RCAAP
Other Site Development Briefs	As required	As required	Core Strategy, SDPD, RCAAP or Local Plan
<i>Other Document</i>			
Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule	Completed	March 2015	Core Strategy, SDPD, RCAAP


3.2 The key document is the Local Plan. Other than the alteration to existing affordable housing policies, this is the sole document with development plan status that the Council is intending to produce, and it would replace all existing Development Plan Documents (the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan, Sites and Detailed Policies Document and Proposals Map), as well as saved policies from the Minerals and Waste Local Plans. It will build on, and where appropriate incorporate, the policy areas set out in those DPDs, and respond to emerging issues, particularly those highlighted in the NPPF. As set out in the NPPF, a combined Local Plan is now the preferred format for development plans, and this is the reason for the Council's approach. Full details on the Local Plan are set out in Appendix 1.

3.3 The Local Plan ~~may well incorporate minerals and/or waste policies~~ not currently intended to contain minerals and waste policies, which were previously intended to be part of a separate Minerals and Waste Development Framework. This was to be produced jointly with the other five unitary authorities in Berkshire, but the Berkshire UAs abandoned the formal joint planning arrangements in 2011.

However, there may well still be some form of joint working on minerals and/or waste (as well as other strategic planning matters with cross-boundary implications), on evidence gathering or potentially joint plan making with some neighbouring authorities. This will affect whether these matters can be included within the Local Plan. Future versions of the LDS will provide more up-to-date information.

~~3.4 However, the Council has identified a need to review its affordable housing policies prior to the production of a full Local Plan. The reason for this is to get a full set of policies in place that reflect latest viability considerations, to allow for the examination of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Seeking to introduce CIL with the policies worded as they stand risks the Council having to introduce a CIL rate for residential development that is very low or even nil. That would severely affect the funding of transport, education, open space and other infrastructure normally obtained from developer contributions. This review is being carried out prior to consultation on the full Local Plan, through a streamlined examination process offered by the Planning Inspectorate, and is now at Examination stage. In preparing the Local Plan in full, these amended policies could then be incorporated into the document, or considered for further revision at the time.~~

3.54 The Council will ~~also~~ continue to produce Supplementary Planning Documents, in order to help applicants make successful applications and aid infrastructure delivery by expanding on policies in development plan documents. These will include Briefs for important development sites, as well as documents expanding on topic-based policies, particularly those related to infrastructure delivery, alongside continuing to progress the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

3.75  Figure 3 summarises the interrelationship between existing and new planning policy documents.

3.86 Progress on production of planning policy documents is monitored in the Annual Monitoring Report, generally produced in December each year. These can be found on the Council's website⁴.

⁴ ~~http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/planning/planning_policy/research_monitoring_and_technical_reports/www_reading_gov_uk_amr/~~ ~~<http://www.reading.gov.uk/readingldf>~~

PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS AT APRIL 2016

PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS AT 2018

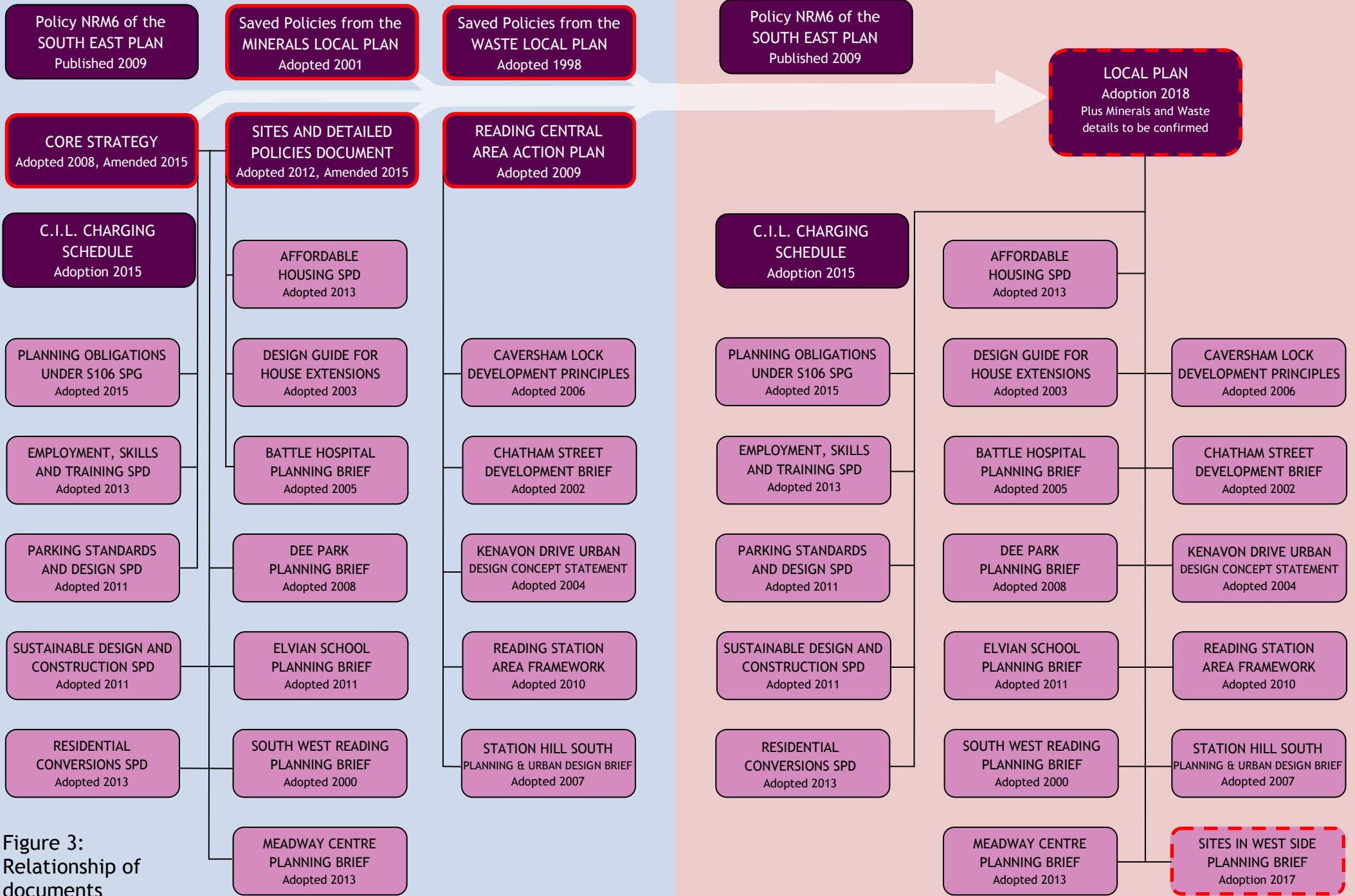


Figure 3:
Relationship of documents

APPENDIX 1: LOCAL PLAN PRODUCTION

Summary

Title	LOCAL PLAN
Role and Subject	<p>Vision and key objectives; spatial strategy; overall development needs including for housing, employment, retail and leisure, community uses and infrastructure; development management policies, including design, sustainable design, local requirements for infrastructure and affordable housing, amenity etc; site allocations to meet development needs; designation of land for protection or other policy designations; implementation and monitoring framework.</p> <p>Potential to include minerals and waste policies and allocations (see paragraph 3.3).</p> <p>On initial consideration, the following are likely to be among the main areas where revision to policy will need to be considered. Most of these are due to changes in national policy in the NPPF, national priorities such as progress towards zero carbon, or the national planning system (CIL, permitted development rights).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of development need that should be accommodated (housing, employment, retail, infrastructure, other uses); • Location of development, including site allocations; • Consider inclusion of minerals and waste policies; • A strategy for the historic environment; • Updated sustainable design policies; • Updated infrastructure provision policies to reflect changes to CIL and Section 106; • Any changes to policies needed to reflect new permitted development rights (e.g. residential amenity and employment) <p>It is expected that many other policy areas will not need major change, and can largely be transferred to a new Local Plan, subject to consultation and Sustainability Appraisal.</p>
Geographic coverage	Whole of Reading Borough
Status	Development Plan
Joint preparation	There is potential for some joint preparation of parts of the plan with neighbouring authorities, in particular relating to minerals and waste and other strategic cross-boundary matters. This will be a matter for further discussion with adjacent authorities, and more information will be reported in future versions of the LDS if and when it becomes available. Joint preparation of evidence for many aspects of the plan will be pursued.
Policy lineage	National policy
Documents that would be replaced	Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan, Sites and Detailed Policies Document, Proposals Map. Also potentially Replacement Minerals Local Plan (saved policies), Waste Local Plan (saved policies)
First call for site nominations	January 2014, September 2015
Consultation on issues and potential sites/options	September 2015-January 2016
Draft Local Plan for consultation	August 2016-January 2017
Revised Draft Local Plan consultation	November/December 2016-August/September 2017
Submission	January 2017-December 2017
Examination	March, April, May 2017-2018
Adoption	October 2017-September 2018

Detailed Timetable

A1.1 The table below shows the main blocks of work in drawing up a Local Plan, and approximately when they are expected to be undertaken. The fact that a certain element of work is not shown does not mean that it will not be undertaken, merely that it does not form one of the most significant elements of work for project planning. Likewise, the timescales shown are approximate only and are an indication at this stage - the main milestones that progress should be judged against are those shown in the Local Plan table in [Appendix 2 above](#) (and highlighted as key stages in pink below).

2014	Jan	First call for site nominations		
	Feb			
	Mar			
	Apr	Consultation on Draft CIL Charging Schedule and Pre-Submission Draft Affordable Housing Alteration		
	May			
	Jun			
	Jul			
	Aug	Submission of CIL and Affordable Housing policies		
	Sep			
	Oct	Examination of CIL and Affordable Housing policies		
	Nov			
	Dec			
2015	Jan	Housing evidence (including population and demography)	Evidence – Employment and retail needs Evidence – Minerals and waste	Evidence – flood risk
	Feb			
	Mar			Adopt CIL/Affordable Housing
	Apr			Evidence – Infrastructure needs
	May	Strategic Housing Market Assessment (housing needs)		
	Jun			
	Jul			Set up mechanisms for Duty to Cooperate and initial discussions
	Aug			
	Sep	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (housing capacity)		
	Oct			
	Nov			
	Dec			
Jan	Consultation on issues and options, including potential sites			
Feb				
2016	Jan	Develop overall strategy of development scale and location		
	Feb			
	Mar	Develop development management policies	Develop site allocation and area designations	Update evidence base
	Apr			
	May	Test draft policies for viability	Create Draft Proposals Map	Develop monitoring and implementation framework
	Jun			
	Jul	Consultation on Draft Local Plan		
	Aug			
	Sep	Amendments to Plan, including further liaison with interested parties on wording.		
	Oct	Update evidence where necessary.		
	Nov	Consultation on Revised Draft Local Plan		
	Dec	Minor amendments and coordination of evidence		
2017	Jan			
	Feb	Submission of Local Plan		
	Mar			
	Apr			
	May	Examination of Local Plan		
	Jun			
	Jul			
	Aug			
	Sep	Receipt of report of Inspector		
	Oct	Adoption of Local Plan		
	Nov			
	Dec	Statutory challenge period		

Key milestone (shown in summary)

External advice (e.g. consultant) may be required

2015	Jan	Adopt Affordable Housing Alteration			
	Feb		Evidence - Strategic Housing Market Assessment		
	Mar				
	Apr				
	May				
	Jun				
	Jul				
	Aug				
	Sep	Second call for site nominations			Set up mechanisms for Duty to Cooperate - Scoping Strategy
	Oct				
	Nov				
	Dec				
2016	Jan	Issues and Options consultation		Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment needs • Retail and leisure needs • Flood risk 	
	Feb				
	Mar				
	Apr	Develop overall strategy of development scale and location	Evidence - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment		
	May				
	Jun				
	Jul	Develop development management policies	Develop site allocation and area designations	Update evidence base	
	Aug				
	Sep				
	Oct				
	Nov	Test draft policies for viability	Create Draft Proposals Map	Develop monitoring and implementation framework	
	Dec				
2017	Jan	Consultation on Draft Local Plan			
	Feb				
	Mar				
	Apr	Amendments to Plan, including further liaison with interested parties on wording.			
	May	Update evidence where necessary.			
	Jun				
	Jul				
	Aug	Consultation on Revised Draft Local Plan			
	Sep				
	Oct	Minor amendments and coordination of evidence			
	Nov				
	Dec	Submission of Local Plan			
2018	Jan	Examination of Local Plan			
	Feb				
	Mar				
	Apr				
	May				
	Jun				
	Jul	Receipt of report of Inspector			
	Aug				
	Sep	Adoption of Local Plan			
	Oct	Statutory challenge period			

Key milestone (shown in summary)

External advice (e.g. consultant) may be required

Resources

A1.2 Much of the work to be undertaken on the Local Plan will be carried out using existing resources, in particular preparing policies and documents, carrying out sustainability appraisal and liaising with key consultees and stakeholders.

A1.3 However, as can be seen from the table above, there are some particular points which are particularly resource-intensive or where additional resources will be required. These are summarised by financial year below:

- ~~2013-2014~~
 - ~~— Engage with local community and development industry to nominate potential sites for development~~
- 2014-2015
 - Examination of CIL and affordable housing alteration
 - Evidence base - housing need, ~~employment and retail need and flood risk~~
- 2015-2016
 - Evidence base - housing need (continued), employment and retail need ~~(continued), minerals and waste evidence, flood risk~~
 - ~~Wide-ranging consultation on issues and potential sites~~ Consultation on issues and options
- 2016-2017
 - Viability testing of draft local requirements (e.g. S106/CIL, affordable housing, sustainability policies)
 - Evidence base - infrastructure needs
 - Consultation on Draft ~~and Revised Draft~~ Local Plans
- 2017-2018
 - Consultation on Revised Draft Local Plan
 - Finalisation of submission evidence
- 2018-2019
 - Examination of Local Plan

A1.4 In the case of consultation exercises, these are usually managed in-house using existing staff, although there may be financial implications where they are wide-ranging. Elements of evidence gathering that are highlighted are likely to involve external expertise, most likely the use of planning consultants, with associated costs, although in some cases the costs can be reduced by combining in-house expertise with work by consultants and commissioning studies jointly with adjoining local authorities. In terms of the Examination, this can be a significant financial cost, as the Planning Inspectorate charges the Council for their time, and there are additional resource implications in terms of administration support and room hire etc.

A1.5 The Local Plan is the most significant of the documents to be produced within this Local Development Scheme. It is currently considered that there are likely to be sufficient resources to produce this document alongside the other documents listed in Appendix 3, albeit that additional resource pressures will arise in commissioning necessary studies and holding an examination which exceed budget allowances (see above). However, in the event that resources are too limited to allow this, the Local Plan will generally take priority, unless there are strong reasons for this not to be the case. ~~The possible exception is for introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, which is an important priority to ensure that development mitigates its impacts and contributes towards the provision of vital infrastructure.~~

Risks

A1.6 There are a number of potential risks in producing a document such as the Local Plan. These are considered below:

- **Changing national policy:** If new policy is introduced at the national level, this can cause significant issues in terms of delaying and derailing local policy. This was the case in Reading when the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework caused an approximately six month delay in adopting the Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

~~The main area where national policy is likely to change in the near future is in terms of waste planning. The NPPF does not deal with waste, and new national guidance is due to be put in place. Prior to such policy being in place, it would make no sense for the Local Plan to attempt to include local waste policies, so the Local Plan should proceed without waste being included, and it can be dealt with in a later document. However, it is anticipated that national waste policy should be in place soon (consultation on the draft policy finished in September 2013) and can be taken on board in producing local waste policies.~~

- **Changing national planning system:** The planning system has been extensively tinkered with in recent years. Some changes, for instance new permitted development rights introduced in May 2013, have implications for policies on residential amenity and employment land. Other changes have included changing regulations on CIL, which affects when the Council can progress its Draft Charging Schedule and associated policies on Section 106 agreements. Changes are currently proposed around in-principle permissions for brownfield land. There is little that the Council can do to guard against this other than to monitor the situation and take early action to alter the programme or the document itself if needs be.

- Less resource availability:** Reduced resource availability is a real risk to the programme envisaged. It could mean longer timescales for policy drafting or in-house evidence collation. It could also mean being unable to finance external consultants to produce key documents. In the latter case, the Council will need to consider whether certain pieces of evidence can instead be produced in-house, or whether the timescale of the Plan should be pushed back to allow this to be budgeted for in a later financial year. In general, although some reasonable flexibility is built into the current programme, much reduced resource availability is likely to mean a delay in the timescale, and this will need to be reflected in future versions of the LDS. ~~This is one reason for the changes between the 2013 and 2014 versions of the LDS.~~
- Changing local circumstances:** It is not considered likely that there will be substantial changes to local planning circumstances (e.g. demography, development pressures, economic changes) that would cause a major issue for the programme outlined in this LDS. Planning policies should be drafted with enough flexibility to cope with changes in circumstances, and the flexibility of the policies will be one of the tests when the document is examined.
- Duty to Co-operate:** The duty to co-operate, introduced through the Localism Act 2011, is one of the most significant considerations in plan-making, and has been the reason for delays in plan production in a number of other authorities. It is the first thing that an Inspector will consider in examining a plan. In Berkshire, there is a tradition of joint working, but there are nevertheless some difficult issues to address with other authorities, both in Berkshire and elsewhere, particularly since some of Reading's objectively assessed needs may need to be met in adjoining authorities. Waste planning is one such potential issue, and cooperation will also be required for delivery of housing and infrastructure provision, including education. Setting up procedures and an ongoing process for cooperating with neighbouring authorities to try to resolve these issues is therefore a priority early in the process.

~~Affordable Housing policies~~

~~A1.7 The review of the Local Plan will be preceded by a more limited review of the Council's affordable housing policies. The information on this is shown below.~~

Title	REVIEW AND ALTERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICIES
Role and Subject	Policies for securing affordable housing from residential development
Geographic	Whole Borough

coverage	
Status	Development Plan Document
Policy lineage	National policy
Documents that would be replaced	Core Strategy policy CS16 Sites and Detailed Policies Document policy DM6
Issues and Options	November 2013
Pre-Submission Draft	March 2014
Submission	August 2014
Examination	November 2014
Adoption	March 2015

APPENDIX 2: OTHER DOCUMENTS TO BE PRODUCED

Title	SITE SPECIFIC SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS S.P.D.
Role and Subject	Framework for determining how planning obligations will be sought to deal with individual site-specific issues.
Geographic coverage	Whole Borough
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Policy lineage	Core Strategy, Sites and Detailed Policies Document
Documents that would be replaced	Planning Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 SPD
Draft	March 2014
Adoption	March 2015

Title	SITES IN WEST SIDE OF CENTRAL READING DEVELOPMENT BRIEF(S)
Role and Subject	Examining the development potential of several sites including the Hosier Street area and the Cattle Market
Geographic coverage	West Side Major Opportunity Area (policy RC2 of Reading Central Area Action Plan)
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Policy lineage	Reading Central Area Action Plan
Documents that would be replaced	None
Draft	November 2015 2016
Adoption	March 2016 2017

Title	OTHER SITE DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS
Role and Subject	Examining development potential of various sites including sites identified and proposed for allocation for development in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document, and sites identified through the production of the Local Plan.
Geographic coverage	Various
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Policy lineage	Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan, Sites and Detailed Policies Document, Local Plan
Documents that would be replaced	None
Draft	As required
Adoption	As required

Title	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY CHARGING SCHEDULE
Role and Subject	Basis for applying the Community Infrastructure Levy to secure funding from development for infrastructure to support growth and development.
Geographic coverage	Whole Borough
Status	Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
Policy lineage	Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan, Sites and Detailed Policies Document
Documents that would be replaced	None
Preliminary Draft	February 2013
Draft	March 2014
Submission	August 2014
Examination	November 2014
Adoption	March 2015