

Executive Committee Report 2025

13th May

Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation 2025

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|--|---|---|
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | | Councillor Sharon Harvey |
| Portfolio Holder Consulted | | Yes |
| Relevant Assistant Director | | Ruth Bamford |
| Report Author | Job Title: Ruari McKee Contact email: ruari.mckee@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: (01527) 881272 | |
| Wards Affected | | All |
| Ward Councillor(s) consulted | | Yes Via Planning Advisory Panel |
| Relevant Council Priority | | Economic Development Community and Housing |
| Non-Key Decision | | |
| If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting. | | |

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND to Council that:-

- 1) The Council endorses Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options consultation document (Appendix A) for a six-week public consultation period.**
- 2) That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Governance to make any minor technical corrections and editorial changes deemed necessary to aid the understanding of the documentation prior to final publishing.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a six-week Issues and Options consultation period for the Borough of Redditch Local Plan (BORPL5).
- 2.2 A Local Plan sets out the Council's policies on land use and guides development. The Local Plan's purpose is to determine where and how housing, employment and infrastructure are all delivered in the Borough.

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Individual planning applications are made in accordance with the adopted Local Plan policies unless there are significant mitigating circumstances.

- 2.3 The current Borough of Redditch Local Plan (BORLP4) was adopted in January 2017. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that local plans are reviewed every 5 years. Therefore, BORLP4 is due to be reviewed.
- 2.4 Since BORLP4 was adopted, there have been a significant number of changes to the planning system which the Plan needs to be updated to reflect. Updated and new policies will be required to address issues such as housing and employment provision, sustainability, climate change and towards meeting the requirement for biodiversity net gain introduced in the Environment Act 2022. Owing to the age of BORLP4, if it is not reviewed there is a risk that the Plan's policies will become out of date. The best option is therefore considered to be proceeding with the Issues and Options consultation.
- 2.5 The chapters of the Borough of Redditch Issues and Options Local Plan consultation document provide background information on key issues and ask consultees questions to help shape planning policies (to be developed for later stages of the plan).
- 2.6 Housing is of course central to the Issues and Options document. Redditch needs to provide at least 489 dwellings per annum, equivalent to 8,313 additional dwellings up to the period 2043. When existing land allocations, current planning permissions and the windfall allowance are accounted for, this results in a need for new land to be identified for around 3,900 dwellings. The potential broad locations for housing growth and housing mix options are identified in the document. Employment land need (35ha by 2043), options for meeting future employment land requirements and how the plan can help harness investment in regeneration sites is considered. Consultees are also asked how they think the town centre and local centres can adapt to changing retail requirements. Climate change is the golden thread running through the document, with each section focused on how sustainable development can be achieved. The Local Plan is an opportunity to help some of the measures identified in the Redditch Borough Council Carbon Reduction Strategy and Implementation Plan. For example, improving energy efficiency standards.

Next Steps:

- 2.7 The proposed Issues and Options consultation would run for 6 weeks, from 22th May to 3rd July.

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- 2.8 All consultation responses received will be processed, analysed and a consultation report produced identifying key themes and demographic information. This work will inform the development of the next stage of the plan-making process.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Issues and Options consultation (or 'Regulation 18' consultation) is the first stage of the plan-making process. The purpose of the Issues and Options consultation is to consult the public, statutory consultees and a range of stakeholders on what the new Local Plan should contain. An Issues and Options consultation is less detailed than future consultations in the plan-making process (such as a 'Preferred Option' consultation). Therefore, the Council has some discretion over the format of the Issues and Options consultation.
- 3.2 No proposed development sites will be included in the Issues and Options consultation. However, the Call for Sites process, whereby landowners and developers have the opportunity to submit potential housing and employment sites for consideration, is proposed to form part of Issues and Options consultation. Actual site allocations would form part of the future plan-making stages.
- 3.3 Only a limited range of evidence will support the Issues and Options consultation because the evidence will be gathered as the draft Local Plan progresses towards the final submission stage (which is then subject to examination by an independent Planning Inspector.)
- 3.4 The new Local Plan will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report, which also forms part of the consultation. The Scoping Report reviews relevant policies, assesses key baseline data, identifies key sustainability issues and defines the SA framework. A Sustainability Appraisal assesses to what extent a local plan promotes sustainable development. The SA is a key part of the local plan process that can shape and even change proposed local plan site allocations and planning policies to make them more sustainable.
- 3.5 Consultation methods will be designed to reach the broadest range of consultees possible, with the integration of both digital and non-digital consultation methods to achieve this. Council Officers will be available at in-person events, so the public are able to speak with Officers directly.
- 3.6 For this consultation, a consultation online platform called 'Commonplace' will be used. This consultation platform should make it easier to engage with 'harder-to-reach' groups such as young people.

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Commonplace should also make the consultation process more engaging for consultees (through offering a range of options such as being able to look at interactive maps) and enables more detailed post-consultation analysis by using data gained from the digital platform to identify demographic data about consultation respondents. The text used in the Issues and Options document will be consistent with the text used on Commonplace for consistency. The consultation will be undertaken in compliance with GDPR rules on data and the relevant privacy notes will be displayed so respondents are clear how data they provide will be used.

- 3.7 The Issues and Options consultation document will be published on the Council's website, statutory consultees notified and paper copies of the document will be available in the temporary customer services centre (5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre), libraries and other locations throughout the Borough. Press releases, leaflets/posters and social media channels will be used to promote the consultation and consultation events to maximise attendance.
- 3.8 Consultees will be encouraged to reply via Commonplace, however email and paper responses will also be accepted to make responding to the consultation as accessible as possible. A dedicated email address (redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) will be available for consultee responses. All consultation documents will be made available on a dedicated webpage and Commonplace url:

<https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/policy/planning-policy/redditchplan>

<https://www.redditchplan.commonplace.is>

- 3.9 The consultation document itself considers different locations for growth, housing numbers and mix, employment land, travel and infrastructure provision, Town Centre and District Centres, design coding and climate change. Consultees will also have the opportunity to log any issues they think have been missed and should be considered as part of the plan-making process.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A budget exists for the production of the Local Plan, this consultation is being funded from this budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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- 5.1 The Issues and Options consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 which outlines the statutory obligations for the consultation. The consultation will also meet the commitments set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI includes an explanation of the plan-making process and identifies the consultation methods the Council will use during the consultation process.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 The latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and English Devolution Bill were published near simultaneously in December 2024. The Department for Communities and Local Government have made it very clear that plan making has to continue with all authorities being required to have a new plan timetable and subsequently a new plan in place as quickly as possible.
- 6.2 It is considered that the best way to mitigate any potential risks to the new Redditch Local Plan from Local Government reorganisation would be to advance the Local Plan review as far as possible to align Redditch with the latest planning reforms.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.3 The recommendations detailed in this report will support the following new proposed priorities for the Council Plan 2025 – 2028:
- 6.4 1. Economy, Regeneration and Prosperity

The Borough of Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options consultation provides an opportunity for consultees to shape future employment, town centre and local centre sites and policies.

3. Community and Housing:

The Borough of Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options consultation provides an opportunity for consultees to shape future housing allocations and policies.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 The local plan will have significant implications for climate change, shaping the location and nature of new housing, employment, and infrastructure development. To ensure that climate resilience and

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sustainability are at the forefront of our planning, the Council needs to adopt specific strategies such as promoting renewable energy sources, enhancing green infrastructure, and improving energy efficiency. This should ensure that only the most sustainable developments come forward. Additionally, prioritising sustainable transport options to reduce car dependency, implementing flood risk management strategies, and ensuring biodiversity net gain in all projects, will help Redditch Borough achieve its commitment to Net Zero by 2050 and create a more sustainable and resilient community.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.6 This consultation will be open to all to comment in multiple ways both online and in hard copy. Consultation events will also take place in a variety of locations and at different times of the day. Every effort will be made to ensure that we reach the widest amount of people and organisations as possible.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The Government have stated that all Local Government Authorities must have an up to date Local Plan. The Council approved the Local Development Scheme in February 2025 which sets out the plan making timetable in order to achieve an up to date local plan. This consultation is in-line with this timetable. The risk of not progressing to a new Local Plan is being managed by undertaking this consultation. Should the timetable not be kept to in the future there is a risk of intervention by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in local plan making, as outlined in the report accompanying the Local Development Scheme. The table below summarises the Local Development Scheme timetable:

| Year | Action |
|------------------|---|
| May-June 2025 | Issues and Options consultation begins |
| September 2025 | Notice of plan making under 30-month system |
| January 2026 | Gateway 1 (Advisory) |
| May-June 2026 | Public consultation (8 weeks) |
| November 2026 | Gateway 2 (Advisory) |
| March-April 2027 | Public consultation (6 weeks) |
| November 2027 | Gateway 3 (Stop/Go) |

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| December 2027 | Examination |
| June 2028 | Finalisation and Adoption |

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

Appendix A – Redditch Local Plan Issues and Option

Background Papers

Redditch Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) February 2022 [Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment \(HEDNA\)](#)

Redditch Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report (to follow)

Local Development Scheme (LDS) February 2025 [Executive Committee Agenda \(Item 5\) - 24th February 2025](#)

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

| Department | Name and Job Title | Date |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Portfolio Holder | Councillor Sharon Harvey | 24 th April 2025 |
| Lead Director / Assistant Director | Ruth Bamford, Assistant Director of Planning and Leisure Services | 23 rd April 2025 |
| Financial Services | Bob Watson, Section 151 Officer | 23 rd April 2025 |
| Legal Services | Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor - Governance | 2 nd May 2025 |
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| Policy Team | Rebecca Green, Policy Manager | TBC |
| Climate Change Team | Matt Eccles, Climate Change Manager | 20 th April 2025 |