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Foreword

Early last summer we undertook a six-week consultation period to listen to you and gather your views on the Issues and Options across Redditch. The consultation document set out what we thought the issues were in Redditch Borough and what we would need to put into a Local Plan to address them. The purpose of the consultation was to check in with residents, businesses, statutory consultees and other stakeholders to ensure we were on the right lines with our thought process. We received some useful comments from you, which were invaluable which will inform our Local Plan as it evolves through the plan-making process.

Since that time, rather than progress the Local Plan, we need to revisit some of the work we've undertaken to ensure we can align ourselves with the Government's new plan-making process. We have to ask specific questions of you in order to proceed through the new system, which has formed the focus of this document.

Whilst this document covers some of the same matters that we consulted on last year, it is imperative that we robustly align to the new system and to meet the timetabled requirements of the new system. The comments you took time to send us last year are still pertinent but you may wish to comment again in case you feel that your thoughts or any issues have changed over the past 12 months.

Thank you for joining us on this stage of our local plan-making journey and we invite you to read on further and welcome your input on the questions within this document, which will help us to fully comply with our transition from the old plan-making process into the new.

Section 1 - Introduction, overview of plan-making to date and how to respond

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Redditch Borough Council is in the process of reviewing and replacing the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2011–2030, adopted January 2017). The Council has held one consultation to date relating to the new Redditch Borough Local Plan. An Issues and Options consultation along with a Call for Sites exercise was undertaken between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025.
- 1.1.2 The forthcoming Redditch Borough Local Plan will be developed as a new-style local plan in line with the Levelling-up Regeneration Act 2023. It will be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into effect on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The Local Plan will also reflect the forthcoming proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As the Plan is being produced under the new plan-making system, it will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through Gateway 1.
- 1.1.3 It is recognised that the Council has undertaken a Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation under the legacy plan-making system. The work to date, including the responses received, will influence the preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. The requirements of the new system requires the Council to follow the new regulations from start to finish. However, this does not preclude the use of work already completed under the previous, legacy plan-making system. Responses to this consultation should be limited to the purposes of this scoping consultation and the questions set out in this document. This consultation does not address site-specific matters.
- 1.1.4 The scoping consultation marks the first consultation in preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. At this stage, the Council is required to invite representations on matters relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan, including what the Plan should contain, and the methods by which stakeholders should be engaged in its development. The scoping consultation is open for comments from **Friday 3rd July to 5pm on Friday 14th August 2026** (consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered).
- 1.1.5 The scoping consultation follows the publication of the Local Plan timetable and the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation on 29th June 2026, both of which are available to view on the Council's website – **INSERT WEBLINK**.

1.2 Purpose of a local plan and why we need a new local plan

1.2.1 The Local Plan's purpose is to establish a clear, plan-based framework to guide how land is used and developed in Redditch Borough over a typical period of 15–20 years. Its main objectives are as follows:

- Sets the vision and strategy for development
- Allocates land for development
- Helps guide decision-making
- Promotes sustainable development and sets the approach to protecting and enhancing the environment
- Provides certainty for communities and developers
- Enables infrastructure delivery and coordination

1.2.2 The Redditch Borough Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not plan for minerals and waste. Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.

1.2.3 The adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 is nearing the end of its plan period (2030). Since we adopted the Local Plan, the NPPF has stipulated that local plans should be reviewed at least once every five years. The review should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area and relevant changes in national policy. If the area's local housing need figure has changed significantly it is expected that the relevant strategic policies in the local plan will need updating (NPPF, paragraph 34). Given the Council's Plan is nearing the end of its plan period and significant changes in national policy, including the revised standard method for calculating local housing need, a review of the adopted Local Plan is not appropriate. It is also a requirement that Plans look ahead for a minimum of 15 years from adoption, therefore we need to consider development requirements beyond the 2030 Plan period. Therefore, the Council is preparing a new Local Plan rather than just reviewing the adopted Local Plan.

1.3 Overview of new plan-making system

1.3.1 A key Government ambition is to accelerate the adoption of local plans to achieve universal national plan coverage, ensuring they play a positive role in delivering the Government's "Plan for Change" target of building 1.5 million new homes in England by the end of the current Parliament.

1.3.2 In March 2026, the Government introduced new plan-making regulations – the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 – to implement the reforms set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. These regulations are intended to create a faster, more streamlined, and increasingly digital plan-making system. Under the regulations, local planning authorities are required to adopt a local plan within 30 months of passing through Gateway 1 (publication of the self-assessment summary).

1.3.3 An overview of the new-plan making process is provided in Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1: Illustration of the main stages and timings in the 30-month process (Source: GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/30-month-local-plan-process-an-overview>)



Figure 2: Overview of the new local plan-making process (Source: GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-making-regulations-explainer/plan-making-regulations-explainer>)

1.3.4 Before the formal 30-month process begins, there is a preparatory getting ready phase. This lasts for a minimum of four months and requires local planning authorities to publish a local plan timetable, publish a notice of intention to commence local plan preparation and carry out a scoping consultation (further details

of which are provided in section 1.7). Authorities then prepare and publish their Gateway 1 self-assessment summary.

- 1.3.5 The publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary marks the start of the formal 30-month period during which the local plan is prepared, independently examined and ultimately adopted. Within the new plan-making framework, there are two further consultation stages: the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation, followed by the proposed local plan consultation which takes place prior to submission for independent examination.
- 1.3.6 The new system also includes two further Gateway stages, during which the local plan is reviewed during the preparation of the plan by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. At Gateway 2, following the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation, observations and advice is sought to ensure the plan is progressing appropriately. At Gateway 3, following the proposed local plan consultation and prior to independent examination, observations and advice is sought to confirm the plan is ready for submission for independent examination. If at examination the local plan is found to be “sound” and recommended for adoption, the local planning authority may proceed to adopt it.

1.4 Overview of plan-making to date

1.4.1 As part of our review of the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4, we undertook an Issues and Options consultation and Call for Sites exercise between 22nd May and 3rd July 2025. The purpose of the Issues and Options consultation was to gather comments on the draft issues and options for the Local Plan to address. Views were sought on a range of topics including:

- Vision and key issues for Redditch
- Possible growth options
- Housing
- Economy and employment land
- Town centre and local centres
- Infrastructure
- Natural and historic environments
- Climate change
- Design coding

1.4.2 At the same time, we put out a Call for Sites request for developers and landowners to submit potential development sites, for a variety of uses, to us that they wish to be considered for allocation in the emerging Local Plan.

- 1.4.3 The responses received to the consultation are vital and will help shape the Local Plan at later stages.

1.5 Overview of Spatial Development Strategies

- 1.5.1 The English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, sets out the Government's intention to reinstate mandatory strategic planning through the preparation of sub-regional Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) across England. The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 includes provisions placing a duty on strategic planning authorities – such as strategic planning boards, combined authorities, combined county authorities, upper-tier county councils, and unitary authorities – to prepare a SDS for their area. For clarity, Redditch Borough Council is not a strategic planning authority.
- 1.5.2 SDSs are high-level spatial plans looking at least 20 years ahead. They will set the framework for local plans and may apportion housing need and other uses to individual local planning authorities in the sub-region, distribute housing across broad locations, specify infrastructure provision (e.g. transport, utilities and social infrastructure) of strategic importance for supporting development, mitigating/adapting to climate change and promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of that area. SDSs can also identify the general extent of Green Belt boundaries and identify broad locations for nature conservation and habitat enhancement. It is not a large-scale local plan; it cannot be site-specific or allocate sites. The site-specific role is for local plans which must be in general conformity with the SDS.
- 1.5.3 Secondary legislation is needed to bring the strategic planning system into operation and is expected to be laid before Parliament ahead of the summer recess. This will trigger the formal duty to prepare a SDS.
- 1.5.4 SDS geographies will not be formally determined until the relevant secondary legislation has been laid before Parliament. Between 12th February and 26th March 2026, the Government consulted on potential areas for preparing SDSs. No specific SDS geography was proposed for Worcestershire; instead, the consultation invited suggestions on the appropriate geography. Consequently, the geography and timescale for the SDS affecting Redditch borough remains unclear at this time. However, this uncertainty must not hinder progress on preparing the Local Plan.

1.6 Overview of anticipated forthcoming changes to the NPPF

- 1.6.1 On 16th December 2025, the Government published a consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Building on earlier reforms and wider changes to the planning system, the proposals represent a more substantial and definitive update to national planning policy. The Government intends to introduce national decision-making policies, resulting in a more rules-based approach within

the Framework. These proposed changes aim to make planning policy clearer and easier to apply, support the preparation of faster and more streamlined local plans, and provide stronger direction for decision-making to facilitate appropriate housing and employment development.

- 1.6.2 The revised NPPF proposes substantial structural changes, introducing separate sets of policies for plan-making and decision-making. The objectives are to ensure that national planning policy is clear, accessible, and easy to understand; to establish a consistent suite of national policies that are not duplicated or varied in local plans, thereby speeding up plan preparation and avoiding differing standards across the country; and to create a more rules-based and certain policy framework to support timely and consistent decision-making.
- 1.6.3 The NPPF retains individual chapters covering specific topics (see section 5 for further detail). It also introduces substantive reforms aimed at delivering more homes in appropriate locations and strengthening support for commercial development. These include a permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development, a focus on building homes around rail stations, encouraging greater urban and suburban densification, supporting small and medium-sized sites, boosting local and regional economies, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
- 1.6.4 The final revised NPPF is expected to be published in the summer (2026).

1.7 Purpose of the scoping consultation and how to respond

- 1.7.1 The purpose of the scoping consultation is to allow consultation bodies, the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to have their say as to what the Local Plan should contain and what the consultation and engagement strategy should be as we progress the Local Plan through future consultations to adoption, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.
- 1.7.2 At this scoping stage, we are seeking views on the key priorities and challenges facing the Borough; the vision for the Local Plan; the potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies; the evidence base needed to support the Plan; and the proposed consultation and engagement strategy. The following sections explore these matters in more detail. **Some of the sections include questions, highlighted in green boxes, to help guide your responses and enable the Council to gather meaningful feedback as the Local Plan progresses. Please respond only to the questions provided. Any submissions to the consultation that don't relate directly to the scoping consultation or questions asked will not be considered.**
- 1.7.3 The scoping consultation is concerned with establishing the scope and parameters of the Local Plan, rather than considering specific proposals such as the identification of

development sites or the drafting of planning policies. Opportunities to comment on these matters will be provided through future consultation stages.

1.7.4 Responses, including the request to be notified at a specified time*, must be submitted in writing by **5pm on Friday 14th August 2026** in one of the following ways:

- Online – **Smart Survey link from our website**
- By email – Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
- By post – Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

Consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered.

*Responses may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address when one or more of the following steps occur:

Table 1: Stages where stakeholders can be notified if requested

i.	Consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence (Regulation 23).
ii.	Publication of observations or advice received on the Local Plan from a person appointed by the Secretary of State (Section 15CA of the Act).
iii.	Consultation on the proposed Local Plan submission documents (Regulation 27).
iv.	Submission of the proposed Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination (Section 15D of the Act).
v.	Publication of the date, time, and place of the examination hearing and the name of the examiner (Regulation 35).
vi.	Decision of the examiner that the examination is to be paused for further work to be carried out (Sections 15D and 15DA of the Act).
vii.	Publication of the document and any evidence which is sent to the examiner (Section 15DA of the Act).
viii.	Publication of the recommendations and reasons of the examiner received (Section 15D or Section 15DA of the Act).

ix.	Adoption or approval of the Local Plan (Part 2 of the Act).
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If you have requested to be notified when one or more of the above steps occur, or you previously signed up to be included on our consultation database and no longer wish to be notified, please contact the Strategic Planning team by email at Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

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Section 2 - Borough profile

2.1 Borough overview

2.1.1 Redditch Borough is located in North Worcestershire, around 15 miles south of Birmingham. The Borough consists of Redditch town itself in the north, alongside the villages of Astwood Bank and Feckenham as well as several hamlets. The Borough covers an area of 5,435 hectares (13,430 acres). Redditch town contains approximately 93% of the population and accounts for 57% of the Borough's land including Arrow Valley Country Park which splits the town. Redditch town is surrounded by the West Midlands Green Belt, and the Borough is situated towards the southern edge of the wider Green Belt boundary. Approximately 33% of the land within the Borough is designated Green Belt, which extends from the south of the town to the B4090. The ~10% of the Borough south of the B4090 is designated as Open Countryside. The borough is spanned by multiple dual carriageways as well as bus and rail connections into Birmingham City Centre.

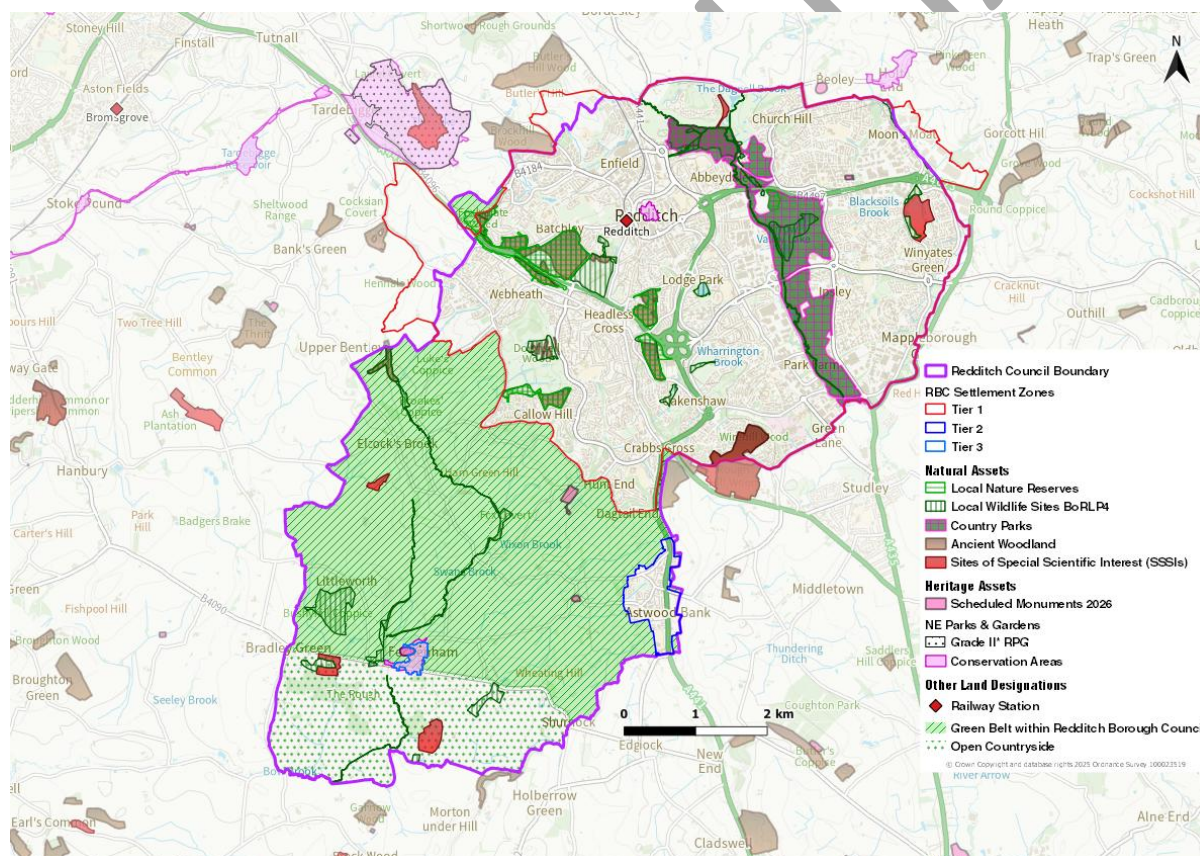


Figure 3: Redditch Borough overview map showing settlements and a selection of planning constraints

2.2 Social characteristics

2.2.1 Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Redditch increased by 3.4%, from around 84,200 in 2011 to around 87,000 in 2021¹. The number

¹ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority](#)

of residents as of the latest ONS population estimates is 87,847 people². As of the 2021 census³, 62.2% of people are aged between 16 and 64, compared to 61.8% for the West Midlands and 62.8% nationally. 18.6% of residents are aged 65 and over, in line with both the national (18.6%) and West Midlands (18.8%) figures.

Describe health as bad or very bad - 4.1 - Census 2021

Life expectancy Male - 79.8 Female - 83.8 - Public Health Profile 2022

15,242 students – Census 2021

Index of Multiple Deprivation

2.2.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)⁴ provides a means of assessing Redditch Borough’s relative deprivation across several domains (Health, Living Environment, Employment, Income, Education, Crime and barriers to services) in comparison to other Authorities in England. The IMD assigns scores and ranks to Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) census divisions. A rank of 1 indicates the most deprived areas and a rank of 10 the least deprived. When the scores of LSOAs within Redditch are combined, the Borough is shown to rank in the middle of England’s 296 Local Authority Divisions at rank 148, suggesting an average level of deprivation across the combined domains.

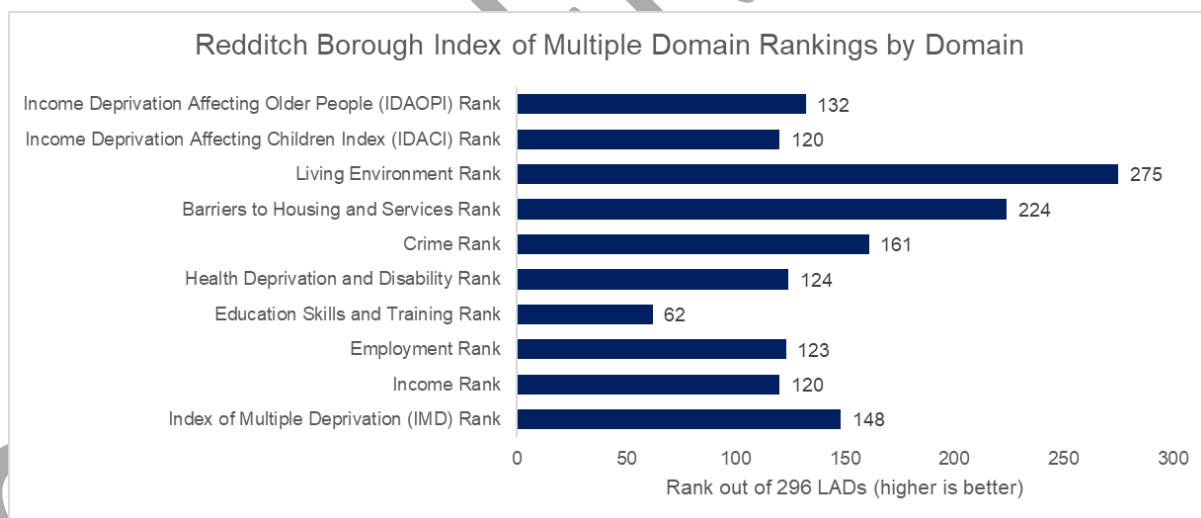


Figure 4: Redditch Borough Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks

2.2.3 Whilst the overall rank shown in figure 4 is useful for showing how Redditch Borough compares to other Local Authorities, the decile individual LSOAs fall in to can show the relative affluence of areas across the Borough. As shown in figure 5, Redditch contains 4 LSOAs within the most deprived decile, and 10 within the least deprived nationally. Whilst the majority of Redditch’s LSOAs rank above 5, the IMD map highlights pockets of relative deprivation spread around Redditch town.

² Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics

³ Age - Census Maps, ONS

⁴ English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release - GOV.UK

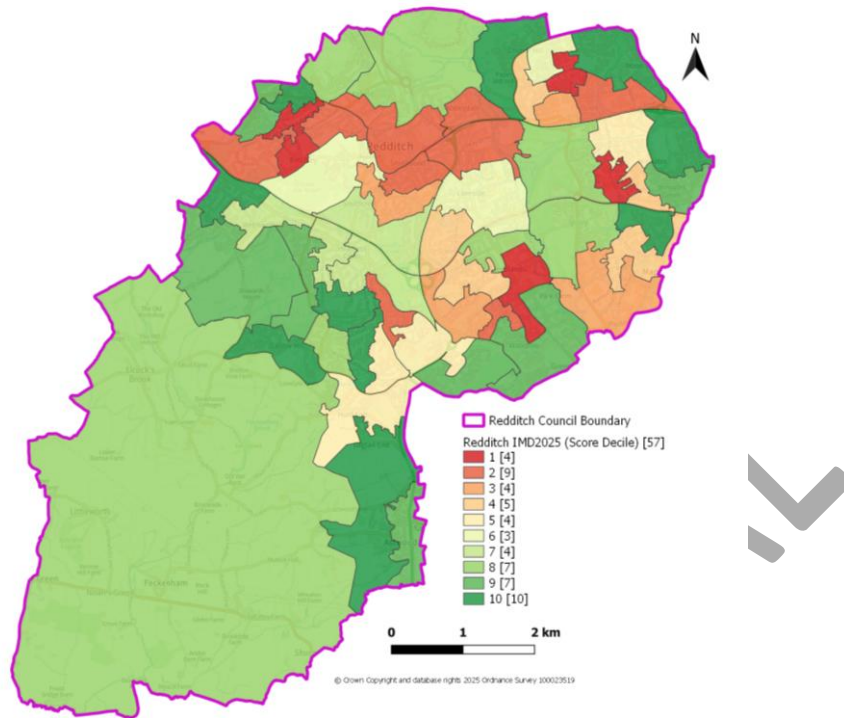


Figure 5: Spatial overview of Redditch Borough Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks by census LSOA.

2.3 Economic characteristics

2.3.1 As of the latest census, 62.2% of residents aged between 16 and over are economically active (excluding full-time students), comprising 59.2% in employment and 2.7% short term unemployed. 21.7% are retired 4% long-term sick or disabled, 4.3% are looking after home or family, 3.5% are students and 2.7% are otherwise economically inactive. Of those in employment 72.9% work full-time (31 or more hours)⁵.

2.3.2 Median annual earnings of people who work within the Borough is £30,780⁶ compared with the median annual earnings for residents of Redditch Borough, which is £29,113⁷, a difference of 5.4%. This would suggest that the Borough's resident population earn lower salaries than the national median (£32,890), and the West Midlands (£31,345).

Travel

2.3.3 As of census 2021, of those 16 and over in employment, 23.1% work mainly from home, 42.6% travel less than 10km, 19.8% travel between 10km and 30km and 2.8% travel greater than 30km. The most common method of travel to work is by car with 57.4% driving and 5.8% as a passenger, 0.6% travel by train and 3.1% by bus. 6.3% walk to work and 1.4% cycle⁸.

⁵ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority](#)

⁶ [Nomis - Query Tool - annual survey of hours and earnings - workplace analysis](#)

⁷ [Nomis - Query Tool - annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis](#)

⁸ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority](#)

Housing

2.3.4 The latest census (2021)⁹ records 36,378 households within Redditch Borough, of which 30.9% are owned outright, 34.3% mortgaged, loan or shared ownership, 20.2% social rent and 14.6% private rent. The average house price in Redditch Borough was £243,000 as of March 2026, slightly lower than the average for the West Midlands (246,000). First-time buyers in the Borough paid £207,000 on average in March 2026. The average monthly rent stood at £900, lower than the average for the West Midlands average of £964. The dwelling type mix of existing stock is 31.4% semi-detached with an average price of £252,000, 31.4% are detached with an average price of £395,000, 25.8% terraced at an average price of £202,000, and 13% are flats or tenements at an average price of £114,000. Of the remaining 2.3%, 1.4% are part of a converted or shared house, including bedsits.

2.4 Environmental characteristics

Natural Environment and Landscape

2.4.1 The Borough is split into the urban area of Redditch in the north, accounting for 50% of the area and 93% of the population; and the rural area to the south with 7% of the population. The rural area consists predominantly of Green Belt land, but also open countryside.

2.4.2 A feature of Redditch's post-war character is that Redditch town itself has a significant amount of open space with 732.18 hectares across the Borough. There are two areas of designated parkland, including the regionally significant Arrow Valley Country Park (364 hectares) which runs through the centre of the town, and Morton Stanley Park (38 hectares).

2.4.3 Redditch Borough features 6 Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs), 24 Local Wildlife Sites and over 87 hectares of land designated as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). There are 25 designated parks, including the Arrow Valley Country Park and Morton Stanley Park.

Historic Environment

2.4.4 Redditch was formerly a market town until 1964 when it was designated as a New Town; a status it maintained up until 1985. During this period the Redditch Development Corporation led the significant growth of Redditch, predominantly to the east of the town. As identified at the start of this document, Redditch's twentieth century development has become one of the towns defining features.

2.4.5 Redditch Borough contains 2 conservation areas, 164 listed buildings (153 Grade II, 10 Grade II* and 1 Grade I) and 8 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and over 500 other heritage assets, including locally listed heritage assets. The two Conservation Areas are Feckenham Conservation Area and Church Green Conservation Area. The former is known for its traditional cottages, narrow lanes, and green spaces that reflect its medieval origins, while the latter is centred around St. Stephen's Church, located in the Town Centre.

⁹ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Redditch Local Authority](#)

Section 3 - Key priorities/challenges

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This section identifies key priorities and challenges to inform the content of the Redditch Borough Local Plan.

3.1.2 The current Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (BORLP) priorities and challenges are based around seven key themes, which were identified through the evidence base which supports the current plan. These are provided as an example of key priorities and challenges.

3.2 Adopted Local Plan Challenges

3.2.1 The current Local Plan adopted in 2017 identified the challenges listed below:

3.2.2 Sustainable places to live which meet our needs:

- Population projections indicate significant new demand for housing over the Plan period due to natural growth and migration
- Land availability is scarce, particularly Previously Developed Land
- Cooperate with our neighbours to locate a significant amount of Redditch's unmet requirements in adjoining Districts

3.2.3 Creating and sustaining a green environment:

- Redditch is located within a highly sensitive landscape with the town's growth now nearing its natural limits
- Redditch has a lot of distinctive green features which define Redditch as unique such as open spaces and Green Infrastructure network which needs to be protected
- Locating growth in places to limit out-commuting, make best use of existing highway infrastructure and promote sustainable transport options

3.2.4 Creating a Borough where businesses can thrive:

- Dealing with high rates of vacancy and B1 office units not fit for purpose
- Need to focus on catering for internal employer demand for business types

3.2.5 Improving the vitality and viability of Redditch Town Centre and District Centres:

- There are areas in Redditch Town Centre that are in decline and need regeneration

- Some District Centres suffer from safety, safety perception issues and other issues relating to the poor quality of the physical environment

3.2.6 Protecting and enhancing Redditch's historic environment:

- Redditch has a rich needle-making heritage and historic buildings of local importance to protect

3.2.7 Creating safe and attractive places to live and work:

- Some areas of Redditch suffer from a poor perception of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The implementation of improved design or designing out crime can help reverse this perception

3.2.8 Promoting Redditch's community well-being:

- Health of Redditch residents needs to be improved

3.3 **Key priorities and challenges from the Redditch Issues and Options consultation**

3.3.1 The Redditch Issues and Options consultation in summer 2025 identified a more up-to-date range of issues for Redditch.

3.3.2 **Housing:**

- Meeting demand for Redditch's growing population
- Sustainable locations for new development and regenerating older housing stock
- Redeveloping brownfield sites
- Boundary extension options for expansion within the Borough
- Shortage of affordable housing and family housing
- Shortage of elderly accommodation/retirement villages to meet demand from Redditch's ageing population
- Reduce the council housing waiting list by creating more social housing

3.3.3 **Economy:**

- Regeneration of the Town Centre and District Centres
- Dealing with high vacancy rates in the Town Centre
- Creating more leisure and cultural events to grow the visitor economy
- Attracting investment and growing the economy

- Responding to employment needs in the Borough
- Ensuring the Local Plan is aligned with relevant strategies such as the emerging National Industrial Strategy
- Encouraging investment in emerging technology and green industries
- Working with businesses, education providers and the forthcoming Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre to provide the right size and location of employment land

3.3.4 **Infrastructure:**

- Improving public transport, walking and cycling which will improve overall health of the Borough
- Improve access around the Borough to attractions and green space

3.3.5 **Natural Environment:**

- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Recognising environmental issues such as flooding and wildlife
- Ensuring sustainability across the district
- Making the most of heritage assets and improving the visitor experience

3.3.6 **Climate Change:**

- Reducing carbon emissions through new technology
- Measures to adapt to aspects of climate change e.g. coping with increased rainfall
- Energy efficiency in new developments

3.4 **New priorities and challenges**

3.4.1 The adopted Priorities and Challenges have been updated to reflect the Issues and Options consultation objectives. This provides a list of priorities and challenges that is considered up-to-date.

3.4.2 **Housing**

- Accommodating housing growth in sustainable locations, including the potential for local centre/estate regeneration and potential cross-boundary allocations
- Making effective use of previously developed land (PDL)
- Addressing shortages in affordable and specialist housing, including accommodation for older people

3.4.3 **Economy**

- Allocating sufficient land to attract inward investment and support business growth to retain companies in the Borough as they grow
- Aligning the Local Plan with national and regional economic strategies, including making provision for key sectors such as advanced manufacturing

3.4.4 **Town Centre and Local Centres**

- Revitalising Redditch Town Centre and Local Centres through clear regeneration policies. Align Local Plan policies with other town centre initiatives
- Policies promoting a more mixed-use town centre, including leisure, community and residential uses
- Addressing underused spaces and overall environmental quality

3.4.5 **Infrastructure**

- Improving public transport (especially bus services) and active travel (walking and cycling)
- Enhancing access to key destinations, including employment areas, town centres and green spaces through the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Improvement Plan (LCWIP)
- Ensuring new development is adequately served by new or upgraded infrastructure

3.4.6 **Design**

- Ensure high-quality design throughout new housing development, the town centre and local centres through design coding
- Designing safer places by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour through good urban design

3.4.7 **Environment**

- Protecting and enhancing the Borough's green spaces. Improving access to green spaces and integrating them into healthy, attractive communities
- Conserving and promoting historic assets and local heritage, including Redditch's post-war identity where appropriate
- Enhancing biodiversity and responding to environmental constraints such as flood risk and ecological sensitivity

3.4.8 **Health**

- Promoting healthier lifestyles through access to green space and community facilities

Question 1: Are these Priorities correct, please let us know if there is anything we have missed?

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Section 4 - Vision and objectives

4.1 What is a Local Plan vision?

4.1.1 The vision for Redditch will underpin the Local Plan describing how Redditch should grow, change and what it will look like by 2044. Additionally, it has a role to address the challenges above and will play a leading role in delivering some of the Council's wider priorities, whilst offering a supporting and guiding role for others. The Council Plan 2025-28 identifies the following aspirations for Redditch Borough:

- A happy and safe place to live, work and grow up through the provision of decent homes, crime prevention, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving community engagement.
- A welcoming place for everyone, with something to offer all - children, young people, older people and families. A place where people take pride in our communities and heritage.
- A prosperous place where businesses thrive, so that everyone can achieve their hopes and aspirations for the future.
- A green and healthy place, preserving our open spaces and working in partnership to address health indicators such as levels of obesity, drug and alcohol addiction.

4.2 Feedback on the comments received from the Issues and Options consultation relating to the Local Plan vision.

4.2.1 The Issues and Options consultation identified an emerging vision for the Local Plan, as set out below:

“Redditch to become a greener, safer place with pride in its heritage. Redditch will have more decent, energy efficient homes and employment space to allow businesses to thrive and create highly skilled jobs. Redditch will draw upon its post-war heritage to adapt to the challenge of climate change with new active travel routes, enhanced green infrastructure/natural environment and energy efficient development.”

4.2.2 Residents and other stakeholders were asked if they had a vision for the future of Redditch. There was strong support for a more sustainable and greener Redditch which included the protection and enhancement of existing green spaces and parks and a more environmentally sustainable town. There was a desire for an infrastructure led approach to growth, with improvements to transport, connectivity and local services. Town Centre Regeneration was seen as a priority delivering more affordable and well-designed housing and reinforcing Redditch's distinctive New Town character. Community wellbeing, inclusivity and local pride were key priorities, alongside the need for greater economic opportunity.

- 4.2.3 It is therefore our understanding that the majority of respondents supported a vision for Redditch that prioritises infrastructure-led growth, environmental protection, town centre regeneration, improved connectivity, and the delivery of affordable, well-designed homes, while safeguarding the Borough's distinctive New Town character and supporting strong, inclusive communities.

4.3 Developing a vision for Redditch Borough

- 4.3.1 The aim of developing a specific vision for the **Redditch Borough Local Plan** aligns with the [latest National guidance for Local Plan vision statements](#). Specifically:
- A Local Plan vision should 'set out key aims and objectives for your area over the next 15 years or longer'.
 - 'be ambitious but also reflect what the local plan can realistically achieve through its policies'.
 - The vision must identify no more than 10 measurable outcomes to help monitor progress towards the stated objectives.

Potential aims & objectives

- 4.3.2 The following suggestions for aims and objectives are based upon the feedback received from the Issues and Options consultation. We are interested in your views on these and any additional objectives you think the Borough should aim to achieve. We are also interested in your views on measurable outcomes for the Plan.

Provide the infrastructure required to support Redditch and its future growth

Ensure that all new development in Redditch is phased and aligned with the timely provision of infrastructure, including transport, education, healthcare, utilities and community facilities.

Prioritise brownfield first and urban regeneration

Maximise the use of previously developed land, vacant units and underused spaces, particularly within the urban area and Town Centre, before considering release of undeveloped land.

Promote a Greener, more environmentally resilient Redditch

Protect, enhance and expand Redditch's network of green corridors, parks and open spaces, delivering measurable biodiversity improvements and embedding climate resilience in all development.

Improve sustainability and connectivity

Strengthening public transport and deliver safe and attractive walking and cycling networks.

Deliver affordable and appropriate housing

Deliver the right mix of homes (size, type and tenure), with a strong focus on affordability and provision for different life stages, including older persons and accessible/lifetime homes.

Revitalising Redditch Town Centre

Transform Redditch Town Centre into a vibrant, mixed-use destination that supports retail, leisure, cultural, residential and employment uses.

Reinforcing Redditch's New Town Identity

Protect and enhance Redditch's distinctive New Town structure, including neighbourhoods with local centres and create a strong sense of place and community identity.

Supporting a Resilient Economy and Job Opportunities

Strengthen Redditch's economy by supporting existing employment areas, encouraging new and emerging sectors and linking economic growth with Town Centre regeneration.

Create healthy, safe and inclusive communities

Promote well-being and inclusion by ensuring there is access to community facilities, leisure and green spaces.

Deliver high-quality, sustainable design within all developments

Ensure all development achieves high standards of design, reflecting local character and incorporating sustainable construction and energy-efficient measures.

4.4 Local Plan period

- 4.4.1 Based on the current Local Plan timetable, this Plan is to set out the vision for growth and development of the Borough to 2044. New national legislation requires that local plans are reviewed regularly within this period to ensure that the policies within remain relevant and up to date.

Question 2: Is our understanding from the Issues and Options consultation regarding the vision still correct? We would be interested to hear additional themes that the Local Plan vision should contain.

Question 3: What are your views on the proposed aims and objectives, and are there any that should be changed, removed or added?

Section 5: Local Plan topic-based content

5.1 Potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies

5.1.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. It is also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

5.1.2 The current NPPF (December 2024, amended February 2025) has 17 chapters covering the following topic areas:

- Sustainable development
- Plan-making
- Decision-making
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres
- Healthy and safe communities
- Transport
- Communications
- Effective use of land
- Design
- Green Belt
- Climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment
- Minerals

5.1.3 In December 2025, the Government consulted on a revised NPPF¹⁰, as outlined in Section 1. The final version is expected to be published in summer 2026. A key proposed change is the introduction of national decision-making policies. This more rules-based approach is intended to promote greater consistency and timeliness in planning decisions across local planning authorities in England. The draft Framework includes policies across the following areas:

- Sustainable development
- Climate change
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres
- Communications
- Energy and water
- Minerals

¹⁰ [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system)

- Effective use of land
- Green Belt
- Design
- Transport
- Healthy communities
- Pollution, public protection and security
- Flood risk and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment

5.1.4 The draft NPPF makes clear that local plans should not duplicate, substantively restate or modify the content of national decision-making policies, unless directed by other policies in the Framework.

5.1.5 Many of the topic areas proposed to be covered by national decision-making policies in the revised Framework have historically been addressed within local plans. As the draft Framework advises that such policies should not be duplicated, the role and content of local plans may change. However, as the final version of the NPPF has yet to be published, the definitive form and scope of these policies remain uncertain. Redditch Borough Council will review the final NPPF once issued, and this will be reflected in the next local plan content and evidence consultation.

5.1.6 New-style local plans will be more concise and streamlined compared to those prepared under the previous plan-making system. Drawing on a robust evidence base and informed by consultation feedback, the **Redditch Borough Local Plan** is expected to comprise the following:

- Vision and measurable outcomes.
- Spatial strategy with policies for the amount of development to be provided, land allocations and designations (including land to be protected or enhanced for specific purposes).
- Infrastructure provision and contributions to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- Other local topic-based policies.

5.1.7 Notwithstanding any forthcoming changes to the NPPF, the **Redditch Borough Local Plan** may include policies covering the following thematic areas (not exhaustive):

- Housing – e.g. housing requirement, housing allocations, housing size, type and tenure, gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- Economy – e.g. employment land requirement, employment allocations, protection of existing employment areas, rural economy, town centre, local centres.
- Environment and climate change – e.g. natural environment, historic environment, Green Belt, climate change, energy, water, flood risk, air quality.
- Transport – e.g. sustainable development, active travel, highway impact/safety and mitigation, parking standards.

- Health and wellbeing – e.g. open space, sport and recreational facilities, green infrastructure, services and facilities, health, hot food takeaways.
- Design.
- Site allocation policies.

5.1.8 Following the completion of the scoping consultation, consideration of the feedback received, and publication of the revised NPPF, the Council will review which policies should be included in the **Redditch Borough Local Plan**. Opportunities to provide comments will be available at the subsequent local plan content and evidence consultation stage, as well as during the proposed local plan consultation.

Question 4: Do you agree with the indicative content of the **Redditch Borough Local Plan** and is there anything you would change or add?

Question 5: Do you agree with the topic-based policies that the **Redditch Borough Local Plan** could contain and is there anything you would change or add?

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Section 6: Local Plan evidence base

6.1 Likely evidence base to support the Local Plan

6.1.1 Given the stage Redditch Borough Council is in with the completion of the Issues and Options consultation last summer and commencing preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Council currently has a limited evidence base in place. Some evidence base documents to support the emerging Local Plan may require updating/additional work. Additionally, the Council needs to identify what new evidence is required.

6.1.2 Table 2 below sets out the evidence base compiled to date, the evidence currently being prepared, and evidence that may require updating or new evidence. The evidence prepared to date is available on our website – [INSERT WEBLINK](#). New or revised evidence will be published once finalised or alongside the next consultation stage. As the Local Plan progresses, additional evidence may also need to be prepared or commissioned.

Table 2: Evidence to support the Local Plan

Evidence Documents	Status
Prepared (including evidence prepared that may require updating/additional work)	
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	To be reviewed, the Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA) is to be published at each required plan-making stage
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	Complete, but requires updating
Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy	Complete, to be updated as necessary
Currently being prepared	
Green Belt and Grey Belt Assessment	Commissioned
New evidence required	
Site Assessment and Site Selection Methodology	To be prepared
Housing Land Supply Evidence	To be commissioned/prepared
Settlement Hierarchy Review	To be prepared
Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances Paper	To be prepared
Landscape Sensitivity Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared

Strategic Transport Assessment	Ongoing throughout the preparation of the Local Plan
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	To be commissioned/prepared
Open Space Study	To be commissioned/prepared
Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Viability Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	To be commissioned/prepared
Town Centres, Local Centres and Retail Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Water Cycle Strategy	To be commissioned/prepared
Climate Change and Energy Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Health Impact Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Habitats Regulations Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Green Infrastructure, Ecology and Biodiversity Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared
Heritage Impact Assessment	To be commissioned/prepared

6.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requirements

6.2.1 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations) normally applies to local plans. In summary, the SEA assesses the likely significant environmental effects of a local plan alongside reasonable alternatives. Its purpose is to guide and shape plan-making, preventing or reducing adverse environmental impacts and enhancing opportunities for positive outcomes. The process takes place during the preparation of the plan.

6.2.2 Through powers contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, a new domestic framework for environmental assessment is being developed. The SEA process will be replaced by Environmental Outcomes Reports. The Government is expected to introduce Environmental Outcomes Reports by the end of 2027. Until Environmental Outcomes Reports are introduced the current SEA regulations apply. The transitional approach from SEAs to Environmental Outcomes Reports is not yet known.

6.2.3 A sustainability appraisal considers the local plan's wider economic and social effects (and can also consider potential environmental impacts) to promote sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal should also meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). A SEA is not required if the sustainability appraisal meets all of the requirements of the aforementioned regulations and considers environmental impacts. Guidance released by the Government in relation to the new plan-making system only makes reference to SEAs and therefore it is our understanding that the requirement to carry out a sustainability appraisal has been removed. More detailed SEA guidance is expected in due course.

6.2.4 Redditch Borough Council has prepared a SEA Screening Statement, which can be viewed on our website ([INSERT WEBLINK](#)) and alongside hard-copy versions of this scoping document across the Borough (see section 8). The SEA Screening Statement concludes that the [Redditch Borough Local Plan](#) has the potential to have a significant effect on the natural environment and will require a SEA to be undertaken. It is anticipated that the scope of the SEA will be consulted on at the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation stage.

Question 6: Do you agree with the evidence base to support the Local Plan (table 2) and is there any other evidence you feel we need to inform our Local Plan?

Question 7: Do you agree that the [Redditch Borough Local Plan](#) has the potential to have a significant effect on the natural environment and will require a SEA to be undertaken?

Section 7: Consultation and engagement strategy

7.1 Consultation principles

- 7.1.1 The consultation principles will guide future consultation methods. These principles are informed by methods used during the 2025 Issues and Options consultation.
- 7.1.2 **User-friendly content:** All digital and printed material will use graphics and maps where possible. A clear, concise and 'jargon free' approach will help consultees understanding of proposals as much as possible.
- 7.1.3 **Well-informed consultation responses:** Using clear communication as a starting point, Council Officers will assist consultees wherever possible through explaining key planning concepts and assisting with the use of digital consultation tools. Council Officers will make clear what are material planning considerations and what are not. The Council believes this will help to ensure that both the Council and consultees get the most out of consultations.
- 7.1.4 **Detail-led consultation:** The Council will ensure that consultation text and questions focus on site-specific details, as well as identifying high level matters. The purpose of this is to ensure the capacity of key infrastructure such as specific road junctions, individual schools and GP surgeries are fully assessed against development proposals.
- 7.1.5 **Redditch-wide consultation:** Every Redditch resident should have easy access to consultation events near them where they can discuss development proposals with Council Officers. Consultation events will be held in (a) central locations such as the Kingfisher and the market (b) across as many local centres as possible and (c) in the rural areas of the Borough.
- 7.1.6 **Preventing digital exclusion:** Government requirements for digital-first consultation will be complemented by a clear focus on assisting those without digital access or who would prefer to respond to consultations on paper. Those who want to use digital consultation methods will be supported through a dedicated consultation inbox, phone line and events.
- 7.1.7 **Ensure feedback demonstrates how comments have been considered:** Feedback to consultation responses will seek to address consultees comments, suggestions and concerns. Any changes to the plan as a result of consultation will be demonstrated through a clear 'you said, we did' approach in a consultation summary document for each consultation (scoping consultation, proposed local plan content and evidence consultation and the proposed local plan consultation). These summary documents will identify who was invited to make representations, how they

were invited to make representations, summarise the key issues raised and identify how the Council has taken those representations into account.

7.2 Consultation methods

7.2.1 The below consultation methods reflect the above identified principles. These methods will guide future consultations.

7.2.2 Digital-first consultation

- Emails to consultation bodies and those residents and groups registered on our consultation database
- Council website, with pages guiding consultees to key information and the use of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Social media platforms
- Use of online consultation platforms, questionnaires and surveys e.g. Commonplace
- Use of videos to explain proposals

7.2.3 Physical Materials

- Printed consultation documents available at the Council's offices and libraries across the Borough
- Printed letters, leaflets and posters
- Notices in local papers and local magazines

7.2.4 Events

- 'Drop-in' public consultation sessions in accessible locations across Redditch: in the town centre, in local centres across Redditch and rural areas
- Focus groups (including targeted stakeholder groups such as Parish Councils, Local businesses and employers, community and physical infrastructure providers)
- School and college engagement sessions

7.2.5 Promoting consultations

- Council press releases
- Targeted publicity in specific areas e.g. noticeboards in rural areas
- Utilising local networks to promote consultations – Councillors, parish councils, stakeholders, and internal Council networks to promote consultations

7.2.6 Improving Accessibility and Participation

- Ensuring consultation documents are clear, concise and user-friendly
- Providing more detailed, optional supplementary questions to enable deeper engagement e.g. on design
- Ensure consultation methods prevent digital exclusion

Question 8: Do you agree with the consultation principles identified? What else would you suggest?

Question 9: Do you agree with the potential consultation methods identified? What else would you suggest?

Question 10: Do you consider there is anything else relevant to consultation that has not been mentioned?

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Section 8: Next steps and further information

8.1 Next steps

- 8.1.1 Once this consultation closes at **5pm on Friday 14th August 2026**, all responses will be reviewed, and a report of the findings will be prepared and published on our website. This feedback, together with responses from the Issues and Options consultation, will inform the preparation of the Local Plan. It will also ensure that future consultations engage with you in the most effective way.
- 8.1.2 There will be two further opportunities to help shape the Local Plan. The next consultation is the local plan content and evidence consultation which is anticipated to be held in June 2027 for a minimum of 6 weeks. The final consultation is expected to be held in March 2028 for a minimum of 8 weeks which is a consultation on the full draft Plan before it is submitted for independent examination.

8.2 Further information

- 8.2.1 The Council's website includes all information on the Local Plan; including the Local Plan timetable, notice of intention to commence local plan preparation, scoping consultation details, evidence base, details of the previous Issues and Options consultation, and the privacy notice – **INSERT WEBLINK**. This will be kept up to date throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, and any updates will be published there.
- 8.2.2 This scoping document, SEA Screening Statement, Local Plan timetable and notice of intention to commence local plan preparation are available for inspection at the Council's Customer Services Centre at 5 George Walk, Kingfisher Shopping Centre during office hours until the necessary works at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square are complete*. They will then be made available for inspection during office hours at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square. Additionally, the aforementioned documents are available for inspection at libraries across the Borough (Redditch Library and Woodrow Library) during their respective opening hours. Details and opening times of the libraries can be found online at – https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/find-library?field_district=647&field_type_of_library=All

**The specific date of the movement of the documents from 5 George Walk to the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square will be subject to the completion of necessary works at the Town Hall*

- 8.2.3 Please see Section 1.7 of this document about how to respond to the consultation. If you have any queries, please contact the Strategic Planning team:

By email: Redditchplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 64252

By post: Strategic Planning, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

- 8.2.4 If you need this information in another language/format please call 01527 548284 or email equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

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