
Borough of Redditch Local Plan – Gateway 1 Self-Assessment and Summary of Scoping Consultation.

Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Matt Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Ruth Bamford
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Via PAP
Relevant Council Priority	1. Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity 2. Green, Clean & Safe 3. Community & Housing
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is asked to RESOLVE that

1.The Local Plan Gateway 1 Self-Assessment at Appendix A, be approved for formal publication on the 30th October 2026, and following publication the Council progresses with plan-making as per the published timetable.

2. The Local Plan Summary of Scoping Consultation at Appendix B, is approved and published alongside the Gateway 1 Self-Assessment.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Nationally there has been a change and there is a new system for plan-making in the UK. For Redditch Borough Council (the Council) this means that a new local plan needs to be prepared under the new system. The previous progress made on the Borough of Redditch Local Plan (that was being prepared under the old system), most notably the information obtained from consultation on the Issues and Options over the Summer of 2025, will be rolled forward into the new plan-making system. This work will be used to help inform the decisions taken as the Council prepares a new draft local plan.

- 2.2 Towards the end of last year, work with respect to the above national changes in the planning regulations progressed, and in March 2026 the Government formally introduced the new 30+4 month plan-making system. This system, in conjunction with changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) (NPPF), are intended to streamline plan-making to allow for quicker adoption of Local Plans, therefore increasing the delivery of housing and economic development across the country.
- 2.3 The purpose of this report is to outline the next stage required to continue plan preparation under the new system, allowing the progression of the new Borough of Redditch Local Plan to adoption as quickly as possible.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 In June 2026 the Council considered a report detailing the first three elements of the new plan-making system, those being, the Notice of Intention to Commence plan making, the Local Plan Timetable and the Local Plan scoping consultation. The notice of intention to commence plan making and the Local Plan timetable were both published as per the relevant regulations. The scoping consultation was undertaken between 3rd July – 14th August 2026.

Scoping Consultation

- 3.2 Regulation 22 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 requires that *'A local planning authority must prepare, in connection with the preparation of their local plan, a document to be known as their "summary of scoping consultation"'*. The Summary of Scoping Consultation can be found at Appendix B.
- 3.3 The full details of the consultation are provided in the Summary of Scoping Consultation, including details of who was consulted and whether they responded, individual summaries of each question asked, and also details of out-of-scope comments received. In brief there were 33 respondents to the scoping consultation, 8 from the public, 18 from consultation bodies and other stakeholders, and 7 on behalf of developers and landowners. The responses were submitted via an online survey and via email.

- 3.4 Officers consider that there were no issues raised as part of the scoping consultation which would prevent the Council progressing to the next stages of plan-making.

Gateway 1 Self-Assessment

- 3.5 The next stage of the plan-making process is to pass through 'Gateway 1'. In order to progress through Gateway 1, the Council is required to undertake a self-assessment to demonstrate that it is ready to progress at speed, and meet the 30 month timetable that has been published.
- 3.6 Appendix A is the self-assessment undertaken by officers and takes into account the preparation work undertaken, including the scoping consultation. The self-assessment is based on the template provided by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The accompanying guidance states when completing the self-assessment '*Aim to write in plain English and keep your summaries brief - somewhere between 150 and 250 words per section is what we recommend.*'
- 3.7 Under the overall title of 'How we got ready to prepare a new local plan' there are five sections to the self-assessment.
- We have published a timetable for preparing the plan
 - We have established project management and governance arrangements
 - We planned how we will consult on the plan
 - We began scoping out the content of the plan
 - We began a Strategic Environmental Assessment

As can be seen at Appendix B and as explained at the recent Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) meeting, officers are comfortable that the resources and processes are in place to pass through Gateway 1. This allows the Council to continue preparing the plan in line with the published timetable. For clarity that timetable is repeated below.

<u>Local plan event</u>	<u>Start date</u>	<u>End date</u>
1) Publish local plan timetable under regulation 8	29 th June 2026	
2) Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under regulation 19(1)	29 th June 2026	

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3) Publish notice of scoping consultation under regulation 20(1)(b)	3 rd July 2026	
4) Scoping consultation under regulation 20	3 rd July – 14 th August 2026	
5) Gateway 1: Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment summary under regulation 21(3)	October 2026	
6) Publish summary of scoping consultation under regulation 22	October 2026	
7) Publish notice of local plan content and evidence consultation under regulation 23(1)(a)	June 2027	
8) Consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence (not less than six weeks) under regulation 23	June 2027	July/August 2027
9) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence under regulation 24	October 2027	
10) Gateway 2: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 26	October 2027	
11) Publish Gateway 2 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 26(5)	November/December 2027	
12) Publish notice of proposed local plan consultation under regulation 27(1)(a)	March 2028	
13) Consultation on the proposed local plan (not less than eight weeks) under regulation 27	March 2028	April/May 2028
14) Publish summary of consultation on the proposed local plan under regulation 30	August/September 2028	
15) Gateway 3: observations and advice will be sought under section 15CA(3) of the Act in accordance with regulation 31	August/September 2028	
16) Publish Gateway 3 observations and advice in accordance with section 15CA(5) of the Act and regulation 31(5)	September/October 2028	

17) Submit the proposed local plan for independent examination under section 15D(1) of the Act	October 2028
18) Publish the examiner's recommendations and reasons in accordance with section 15D(13) of the Act and regulation 37.	TBC
19) Adoption of the local plan under section 15EA of the Act	April 2029

- 3.8 In order to formally pass through Gateway 1, the Council must publish the Gateway 1 Self-Assessment summary. This has to be done at least the first day after the period of 4 months after which the notice of intention to commence plan making was published, therefore should members confirm the recommendations above, the Gateway 1 Self-Assessment will be formally published on the Council's website and placed in the Council's Customer Service Centre and libraries in the Borough (Redditch and Woodrow) on the 30th October 2026.
- 3.9 The Summary of Scoping Consultation cannot be published until at least the day after the date on which the Council make its Gateway 1 Self-Assessment summary available. Therefore, should members confirm the recommendations above, the Summary of Scoping Consultation will be formally published on the Council's website and placed in the Council's Customer Service Centre and libraries in the Borough (Redditch and Woodrow) on the 2nd November 2026.

Future Local Plan Stages

- 3.10 The 'local plan content and evidence' stage (local plan event number 8 in the table above) is where the Council will publish for consultation the first draft of the new Local Plan. The timetable indicates that the Council will consult on the draft plan in the summer of 2027. This will allow for all the responses from the previous Issues and Options consultation, the Scoping consultation, the additional evidence such as the revised Green Belt review to be fed into this draft plan and help develop a draft infrastructure plan to be published alongside it as part of the consultation. Following this consultation there will be a gateway assessment carried out by an assessor appointed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), which will consider issues the plan may be facing at this stage, and if necessary, suggest ways in which any issues may be overcome.
- 3.11 The 'proposed local plan' stage (event 13 in the table above) is in effect the submission plan which the Council would like to present to the appointed Planning Inspector. This stage has been timetabled for

Spring 2028. This is to allow for enough time to respond to the previous stages, and also for a third gateway check on the plan to be carried out by PINS prior to formal submission for independent examination.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Plan process has a budget of £1,063,000, financed as follows:
- 4.2 An initial £885,000 has been identified in Council reserves from 2026/27 onwards to fund the evidence base development, Examination in Public costs and any associated legal fees.
- 4.3 Funding of £70,000 has been awarded by MHCLG to progress the Green Belt Assessment. An additional £108,000.00 has been awarded by MHCLG to help progress the Local Plan. To release the £108,000.00 the following requirements must be met by the Council:
- Publish a Notice of Intention to commence Local Plan preparation by 30th June 2026; and
 - Publish Gateway 1 Self-Assessment by 31st October 2026.
- 4.4 The table below shows the breakdown of the budget.

Evidence base costs RBC	£660,000
Legal Fees	£125,000
Examination costs	£100,000
MHCLG Green Belt Review	£70,000
MHCLG Plan Making	£108,000
Total Local Plan Spend	£1,063,000

- 4.5 Staffing resource comes from existing posts within the establishment supplemented by three additional posts. There is currently one vacancy within the establishment, and additional posts, are currently in the process being recruited to.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The new plan-making system is set out in the following regulations The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 In June 2025, MHCLG wrote to Chief Executives of the Worcestershire Councils with an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Included within that letter is the following statement:

'The Government also recognises that developing proposals could distract councils from their essential day-to-day activities. However, residents and businesses depend on councils to deliver crucial services and to continue the efforts needed to establish successful new unitary councils. This is particularly important for advancing local plans to allocate land for new homes. As mentioned in the invitation letters, the Government expects local planning councils to work towards adopting an up-to-date local plan as soon as possible. Local Government Reorganisation should not hinder this vital work, nor should the introduction of the new legal framework for local plan-making later this year or our strategic planning reforms. Significant financial support has already been provided to eligible councils to aid in plan-making, and we encourage councils to utilise additional support available through the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service.'

- 6.2 The position expressed above remains unchanged, plan-making must continue irrespective of the LGR work. The recent announcement about the review into LGR is still being considered as this report is being drafted. As per the statement above LGR is not seen as reason to delay plan-making so irrespective of the outcome of the LGR review, officer advice remains as above, and plan-making must continue.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.3 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan is relevant to the following Council priorities:

1. Economy, Regeneration & Prosperity
2. Green, Clean & Safe
3. Community & Housing

Climate Change Implications

- 6.4 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan will have significant implications for climate change, shaping the location and nature of new housing, employment, and infrastructure development.

Community Impact Implications

- 6.5 The approval of the Gateway 1 Self-Assessment and the Summary of Scoping Consultation provide the communities across Redditch Borough with a valuable update on how the Borough of Redditch Local Plan will be progressed. The final adopted local plan will have policies and allocations which address high-quality design, provide for safer communities and help to address wider health and wellbeing by providing communities with facilities and accessible open spaces.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.6 The consultation process is open to all to comment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risk of not progressing a new Local Plan has been discussed at length in many forums. Whilst the Council does not have to begin plan-making under the new system until December 2026, there is no need to delay the initial processes under the new system until then. MHCLG has made it very clear that it expects plan-making to continue at pace and will not be afraid to intervene if plan-making does not progress.
- 7.2 Plan-making is strongly encouraged without delay. It suggests that the Council is committed to plan-making. Whilst simply progressing the earlier stages of plan-making does not give the control an adopted Local Plan gives, progressing a Local Plan as identified by this report does help to provide evidence that the plan is progressing and shows a pathway to adopting a plan. This is useful information to use in other settings such as development management.
- 7.3 In addition, should the publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary not take place as described in this report, then the additional funding secured will have to be returned to the Government.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix A Gateway 1 Self-Assessment
Appendix B Summary of Scoping Consultation

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer	20.8.26 via PAP
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Guy Revans /Ruth Bamford	10.09.26
Financial Services	James Walton	10.09.26
Legal Services	Claire Felton	10.06.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		N/A