

Reading Borough Council Duty to Co-Operate Scoping Strategy

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to co-operate

1.1.1 There is a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and some other bodies to co-operate on planning for sustainable development, which is contained in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. This is widely known as the 'duty to co-operate' and has quickly become one of the most important considerations in plan-making, and the main vehicle for considering matters of greater than local significance since the demise of regional planning.

1.1.2 The duty requires local authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in the preparation of development plans so far as they relate to 'strategic matters'. Strategic matters are defined as:

"(a) sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have significant impact on at least two planning areas;

and (b) sustainable development or use of land in a two-tier area if the development or use -

(i) is a county matter, or

(ii) has or would have a significant impact on a county matter."

1.1.3 In addition to local planning authorities, the following organisations are also subject to the duty to co-operate:

- the Environment Agency;
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- the Mayor of London;
- the Civil Aviation Authority;
- the Homes and Communities Agency;
- clinical commissioning groups;
- the National Health Service Commissioning Board;
- the Office of Rail Regulation;
- Transport for London;
- Integrated Transport Authorities;
- highways authorities; and
- the Marine Management Organisation.

1.1.4 In addition, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the duty themselves, but local planning authorities must co-operate with those organisations when drawing up local plans.

1.1.5 Whether the local planning authority has complied with the duty is the first issue an Inspector will consider in examining a development plan, and where the duty has not been complied with, plans will not be successful at examination.

1.1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework provides more detail on how the duty is to be exercised, and particularly notes the following strategic priorities that will be matters to which the duty must be applied where they have cross-boundary implications:

- *“the homes and jobs needed in the area;*
- *the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
- *the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- *the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and*
- *climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.” (Paragraph 156)*

1.1.7 Co-operation as set out in the duty is much more than simply consulting the other specified bodies, rather it involves extensive, ongoing co-operation throughout the plan-making process on strategic matters.

1.1.8 More information on the duty to co-operate and how it should be applied in practice is contained in National Planning Practice Guidance (see <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/duty-to-cooperate/>).

1.2 Purpose of this Scoping Strategy

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to identify those issues to address within the local plan that are likely to be strategic matters and which therefore fall under the duty to co-operate, and identify the specified bodies with which co-operation may be necessary.

1.2.2 It may become clear through discussions or evidence production that there are no cross-boundary implications for some matters identified here, but this will only become known through operation of the duty. Likewise, discussions with partners may highlight additional strategic matters not identified here, and these will also need to be considered. This document is merely the first step in undertaking the duty in relation to Reading's local plan processes.

1.2.3 This document will be a 'living document' and therefore subject to change through the plan-making process, as discussions evolve, and as potential joint evidence is produced. It will form part of the evidence base for the local plan.

1.3 Consultation on the Scoping Strategy

- 1.3.1 A draft version of this Scoping Strategy was issued for consultation with key stakeholders, with consultation taking place between 11th September and 9th October 2015. Those stakeholders were the bodies identified as being key duty to co-operate partners in Appendix 1 of the draft. In addition, this Strategy was also shared with other local planning authorities within a 40 km radius of Reading¹ (in case those authorities disagree that there are not strategic matters that will affect their areas).
- 1.3.2 A summary of the comments received as a result of the consultation, together with the Council's response to those comments, is included in Appendix 3.

¹ Winchester; East Hampshire; Waverley; Guildford; Woking; Elmbridge; Runnymede; Spelthorne; Richmond-upon-Thames; Ealing; Hounslow; Hillingdon; the Mayor of London; Three Rivers; Hertfordshire; Dacorum; Chiltern; Cherwell; Oxford; West Oxfordshire; Swindon.

2. STRATEGIC MATTERS

2.1 Housing needs and provision

- 2.1.1 Housing needs and provision, including distribution of housing, is one of the key issues that the local plan must address, and one where fulfilling the duty to co-operate plays an essential role. National guidance states that local planning authorities must identify the housing market area within which their area sits, and work to address housing needs within that housing market area. It also expects authorities, both within the housing market areas and, if necessary, outside it to co-operate on meeting one another's housing needs if it cannot be accommodated within the authority where it arises.
- 2.1.2 Reading Borough Council has been working with West Berkshire Council, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough Borough Council, as well as Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, to produce a Strategic Housing Market Assessment that covers the Berkshire authorities. The main tasks of this Assessment were to identify the housing market area(s) covering Berkshire and to identify the level of housing need.
- 2.1.3 The conclusions of the Assessment in terms of Housing Market Areas identified that Reading sits within a Western Berkshire HMA that also includes West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell Forest, which means that these authorities are key partners in the duty to co-operate for housing. A separate Eastern Berkshire HMA including Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough, as well as South Bucks district, was also identified², but there were elements of overlap between the HMAs that would necessitate engaging in the duty to co-operate with the authorities of the Eastern HMA. The final version of the SHMA has not yet been produced, but the main conclusions have been presented to stakeholders and are publicly available on the Council's website.
- 2.1.4 As the HMA is to be seen as the key geographical unit, it is considered that authorities adjoining the Western HMA will also need to be engaged, in case there is a level of unmet need on either side. In particular, South Oxfordshire District adjoins Reading, and were the HMA to be drawn at below local authority level, parts of that district around Sonning Common and Henley would be likely to be part of the same HMA as Reading. For this reason, South Oxfordshire is also a key partner.
- 2.1.5 There is a potentially significant strategic relationship with London in terms of housing. In producing the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, an adjustment needed to be made to reflect changing assumptions about out-migration from London, which illustrates the

² It should be noted that an initial identification of the Housing Market Areas covering Buckinghamshire identified that South Bucks' best fit was with a single Berkshire HMA. This conclusion differs from the Berkshire SHMA, which looked at the relationships within Berkshire in more detail, but it is not considered that the conclusions are necessarily incompatible. More recent work by the same consultants places South Bucks within a best-fit arrangement with Central Bucks based on their intention to jointly produce a local plan with Chiltern, but Reading Borough Council does not agree that a joint plan changes the realities of the Housing Market Areas.

importance of the issue. The delivery of transport improvements, particularly Crossrail, may also have effects on migration to and from London. This is a relationship with London as a whole entity rather than with individual Boroughs, and the relevant partner will therefore be the Mayor of London.

- 2.1.6 To ensure that all relevant partners are covered, all other authorities within a 20km buffer of Reading are also identified, as this may be close enough to require some co-operation.

2.2 Needs and provision for gypsies and travellers

- 2.2.1 The nature of provision for gypsies and travellers means that it is often a cross-boundary matter. In recent years, the Berkshire authorities have co-operated on planning for gypsies and travellers, and this has included agreeing a joint methodology for Gypsy and Traveller Availability Assessments. It is expected that co-operation across Berkshire will continue, but co-operation with South Oxfordshire is also likely to be necessary.

2.3 Needs and provision for economic development and town centres

- 2.3.1 The assessment of economic development needs is intrinsically linked to the consideration of housing needs, and the two need to draw on some of the same evidence base. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Berkshire, referred to above, will also therefore be a key piece of evidence, and co-operation on economic development matters is therefore already underway within Berkshire. There will be a need for further co-operation in determining the Functional Economic Market Area within which Reading sits, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, and then considering the need for additional employment development. However, Reading's reach as a location to work goes beyond the Berkshire authorities, and will therefore require co-operation with a wide range of other local authorities, and other bodies. There is also a clear London influence, in terms of commuting and other economic relationships, which will need to be subject to the duty to co-operate.
- 2.3.2 Reading town centre is one of the strongest in the region, and has a catchment that covers several local authority areas, extending out towards High Wycombe, Basingstoke and Camberley at the time of the last Retail Study in 2005. Considering town centre and retail development would therefore potentially necessitate some co-operation with a number of local authorities.

2.4 Strategic transport infrastructure needs and provision

- 2.4.1 Strategic transport infrastructure always requires a substantial amount of cross boundary co-operation, particularly in Berkshire, where transport planning matters are dealt with by the unitary authorities, who are substantially smaller than the County Councils who deal with many strategic transport matters in adjoining areas. There is already substantial cross-boundary work going on relating to transport infrastructure matters, including a general grouping of Berkshire transport officers, as well as on specific topics such as the issues around cross-Thames travel.

- 2.4.2 At this point, as well as the national bodies such as Highways England, a wide range of local authority areas have been identified as potentially key co-operation partners, as strategic transport infrastructure needs should be considered across a wide area. Of particular significance, however, are the four local government bodies adjoining Reading - Wokingham, West Berkshire, Oxfordshire County and South Oxfordshire District.

2.5 Strategic education infrastructure needs and provision

- 2.5.1 Due to the tightly drawn nature of Reading Borough, there are a significant number of movements to school across the Borough boundaries, in particular of children from Reading to secondary schools in Wokingham, West Berkshire and South Oxfordshire. School catchments cross authority boundaries, and this must be reflected in close co-operation between Reading and its immediate neighbours.

2.6 Strategic healthcare infrastructure needs and provision

- 2.6.1 Again, the nature of the Reading Borough geography means that many residents will cross the boundary to access healthcare services. This means a need for co-operation with those authorities adjoining the Borough, as well as NHS England and the relevant clinical commissioning groups. Many residents of Bracknell Forest also use the Royal Berkshire Hospital, meaning that there may also be some co-operation necessary to reflect that.

2.7 Utilities infrastructure needs and provision

- 2.7.1 Large scale utilities infrastructure provision is an issue which can have cross-boundary implications. Reading will work with its immediate neighbours to identify any likely significant issues at an early stage, and to identify any measures that need to be taken to resolve the issue.

2.8 Strategic landscape considerations

- 2.8.1 Significant landscapes cross unitary authority boundaries, and therefore require cross-boundary co-operation. The Thames Valley is one of Reading's most significant landscapes, and this crosses boundaries into South Oxfordshire, West Berkshire and Wokingham, whilst the Kennet Valley crosses between Reading and West Berkshire. There are Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty adjoining Reading within South Oxfordshire (Chilterns), and close to Reading in West Berkshire (North Wessex Downs).

2.9 Strategic biodiversity considerations

- 2.9.1 Habitats and wildlife corridors cross boundaries, and therefore require a joined-up approach if the value of the biodiversity asset is to be maintained or enhanced. Biodiversity Opportunity Areas have been identified in Reading that cross into West Berkshire (Kennet Meadows and West Reading Woodlands), meaning that co-operation with West Berkshire is particularly essential, but in the existing Sites and Detailed Policies Document, the Council has identified parts of the green network that cross into all adjacent areas. Co-operation with the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership and Natural England will also be critical, as will co-operation with the Environment Agency as the waterways are key wildlife features.

2.10 Open space and recreation provision

- 2.10.1 Planning for the open space needs of development may require cross-boundary co-operation, for instance to provide an area of space to serve a new development site on the other side of a boundary, or upgrading an existing area of open space that crosses boundaries. Co-operation is most likely to be necessary with Reading's immediate neighbours.

2.11 Strategic flooding considerations

- 2.11.1 The primary flood zones in Reading are those around the Rivers Thames and Kennet, which overlap into South Oxfordshire, West Berkshire and Wokingham. Development in Reading can have implications for flooding elsewhere on the river system, and Reading may need to plan for the effects of development elsewhere. There may also be scope for joint working on flood defence measures. There is therefore a need for co-operation on policy and evidence base.

2.12 Climate change and mitigation

- 2.12.1 Climate change is specified as one of the matters that may need to be subject to the duty to cooperate, but it is also the case that climate change is a global rather than local issue, and it is therefore difficult to define a limit to where the duty-to-cooperate should end. Therefore, as a practical solution, the Council intends to keep the topic on the table with all bodies listed in this document who have a remit that is relevant to climate change.

2.13 Historic environment

- 2.13.1 Co-operation with Historic England on heritage matters is essential, and will go on throughout the local plan process. As far as other issues are concerned, there is potentially a need for co-operation with West Berkshire Council, as the Routh Lane and Horncastle conservation areas adjoin the boundary, and the Kennet Valley, which straddles the boundary, has been identified as having archaeological potential. Where other issues identified here have implications for the historic environment, co-operation with Historic England on those matters will also be necessary.

2.14 Tall buildings and strategic views

- 2.14.1 Reading has a number of existing tall buildings, together with additional buildings in the planning pipeline, and the strategy for tall buildings in the town will be one of the matters the Local Plan will need to cover, building on the existing tall buildings policy in the Reading Central Area Action Plan.
- 2.14.2 Co-operation with Historic England on these matters is essential, given the impact such structures can have on heritage assets within Reading. There may also be a need for co-operation with the Civil Aviation Authority, depending on the height and location of buildings. However, there are also potential cross-boundary implications, as there are areas within adjoining authorities which offer views of central Reading, for instance at

Mapledurham and Play Hatch in South Oxfordshire, or the A4 in Earley in Wokingham Borough, where tall buildings are and would be plainly visible.

2.15 Approach to planning within the consultation zones of the Atomic Weapons Establishment

- 2.15.1 The consultation zones of the two Atomic Weapons Establishments at Aldermaston and Burghfield have implications for planning, in that there are significant concerns with locating homes and jobs above certain thresholds within different zones. The facilities themselves are in West Berkshire, but the zones also cover parts of Reading, Wokingham and Basingstoke and Deane. For this reason, all four authorities will need to co-operate with each other, as well as the Office for Nuclear Regulation, to ensure that levels of development across the areas take this issue into account.

2.16 University of Reading

- 2.16.1 The University of Reading's main Whiteknights campus straddles the boundary between Reading and Wokingham Boroughs, and there are other facilities relating to the University in both Reading and Wokingham. As such, co-operation with Wokingham Borough Council is required.

2.17 Planning for minerals

- 2.17.1 Reading Borough Council, as a unitary authority, is responsible for county planning matters such as development for minerals. Planning for minerals requires a great deal of co-operation, as minerals can only be extracted where they are found, meaning a great deal of cross-boundary movement, sometimes over large distances.
- 2.17.2 The Council is not intending to address minerals within the forthcoming local plan, and wishes instead to work jointly with neighbouring authorities on plan-making for minerals alongside waste planning. As such, the strategy for undertaking the duty to co-operate is not yet fully developed. It is likely that the list of duty-to-co-operate bodies for minerals planning is substantially longer than for other matters, as it will include those authorities where a significant amount of aggregates for use in Reading is sourced, many of which will be some distance away.

2.18 Planning for waste

- 2.18.1 Waste is also a county planning matter, and as for minerals, requires a significant amount of co-operation between planning authorities. Waste travels across boundaries and sometimes a significant distance. As for minerals, the Council intends to work jointly with neighbouring authorities as opposed to dealing with waste planning matters within the forthcoming local plan. As above, therefore, as evidence starts to emerge in drawing up a plan, it will start to point to other potential duty-to-co-operate partners not anticipated in this strategy. This will therefore need to be kept under review.

3. MECHANISMS FOR CO-OPERATION

- 3.1.1 It is not intended that this Scoping Strategy dictate the specific measures that the Council intends to use to undertake the duty to co-operate. Measures will differ depending on the issue and the partner, and one of the first tasks to discuss with each identified partner is how co-operation should be undertaken. The intention in the first instance is to write to each identified partner setting out the strategic issues and seek a way forward from there.
- 3.1.2 However, the following mechanisms may play a role:
- Meetings, at officer and/or councillor level
 - Formal correspondence
 - Memoranda of understanding
 - Joint evidence production
 - Joint evidence methodologies
 - Joint consultations
 - Joint responses to consultations from others
 - Joint frameworks (with general agreement on strategic principles, albeit not within a statutory plan)
 - Joint plans
- 3.1.3 In terms of joint plans, there are not currently any formal proposals for joint plan-making with any other authorities other than on the topic of minerals and waste (please see the previous section). However, the option remains open if it represents the most appropriate way forward on a particular topic.
- 3.1.4 Much of the work that is already underway deals with joint evidence production or joint methodologies. For instance, all six Berkshire unitary authorities are currently co-operating on the production of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, due to report later in 2015, which will identify the objectively assessed need for new housing within the area. This may give rise to further evidence tasks that may be undertaken jointly. A slightly different case is that of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments, where the six authorities agreed a common methodology, with individual authorities then producing Assessments at different times to tie in with their own timescales, but following the common methodology.
- 3.1.5 In general, basic mechanisms for co-operation within the former county of Berkshire are relatively well-developed, dating from the six authorities jointly producing a Structure Plan after the abolition of Berkshire County Council. There are groupings at various levels that meet on a regular basis, including the following:
- Berkshire Leaders
 - Berkshire Chief Executives
 - Berkshire Heads of Planning
 - Development Plans Group (comprising the planning policy lead officers from each of the six authorities)
- 3.1.6 Development Plans Group (DPG) is the grouping that leads much of the joint working that will fall under duty to co-operate, with reference to higher level groupings if needed. DPG, together with the Local Enterprise

Partnership, acts as the steering group for the production of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, for example. In addition, there are also officer level groupings dealing with matters such as minerals and waste and transport.

- 3.1.7 Joint working within Berkshire will continue to develop, and may involve different types of co-operation or different groupings of authorities.
- 3.1.8 There are also some existing arrangements with which London liaises with authorities in the South East, at both officer and member level, and where the wider influence of London on the South East is discussed³. The Council will continue to be involved where relevant.
- 3.1.9 Co-operation with other authorities outside Berkshire is less well-developed, and will need action to develop new mechanisms. In particular, Reading's only immediate neighbours that are not part of existing arrangements that generally cover Berkshire are South Oxfordshire District and Oxfordshire County, and there are likely to be a number of specific cross-boundary issues that will require co-operation.

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/who-we-work/mayor%E2%80%99s-engagement-wider-south-east>

Appendix 1: Summary of Strategic Issues and Relevant Duty to Co-Operate Bodies

	Housing needs and provision	Needs and provision for gypsies and travellers	Needs and provision for economic development and town centres	Strategic transport infrastructure needs and provision	Strategic education infrastructure needs and provision	Strategic healthcare infrastructure needs and provision	Strategic landscape considerations	Strategic biodiversity considerations	Strategic flooding considerations	Climate change and mitigation	Open space and recreation provision	Historic environment	Tall buildings and strategic views	Utilities infrastructure needs and provision	University of Reading	Planning within the consultation zones of AWE	Planning for minerals	Planning for waste
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	✓		✓	✓						✓						✓		
Berkshire Local Nature Partnership								✓		✓								
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓							✓	✓
Buckinghamshire County Council	✓		✓	✓						✓							✓	
Civil Aviation Authority				✓									✓					
Environment Agency								✓	✓	✓							✓	✓
Hampshire County Council	✓		✓	✓						✓							✓	
Hart District Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
Highways England				✓														

Historic England												✓	✓					
Homes and Communities Agency	✓	✓																
Marine Management Organisation																	✓	
Mayor of London ⁴	✓		✓	✓														
Natural England								✓	✓	✓								
NHS England						✓												
NHS North and West Reading Clinical Commissioning Group						✓												
NHS South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group						✓												
Office of Rail Regulation				✓														
Oxfordshire County Council	✓		✓	✓						✓							✓	✓
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓							✓	✓
Rushmoor Borough Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
Slough Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓							✓	✓

⁴ Because the identified strategic relationship with London is with London as a single entity, rather than individual Boroughs, the Mayor of London has been identified as a relevant body, but not any of the specific London Boroughs.

South Bucks District Council ⁵	✓		✓	✓						✓								
South Oxfordshire District Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Surrey County Council	✓		✓	✓						✓							✓	
Surrey Heath Borough Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
Swindon Borough Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
Test Valley Borough Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓								
Vale of White Horse District Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								
West Berkshire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Wiltshire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓								
Wokingham Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wycombe District Council	✓		✓	✓						✓								

Notes:

1. The above listed bodies are those with whom the Council has a duty to co-operate under the Localism Act 2011. There will be many other groups and organisations which the Council will need to consult and liaise with in drawing up its local policies (for instance, the University of Reading will be a key stakeholder in the University issue), and the absence of an organisation from the above list does not mean that the Council will not involve that organisation.

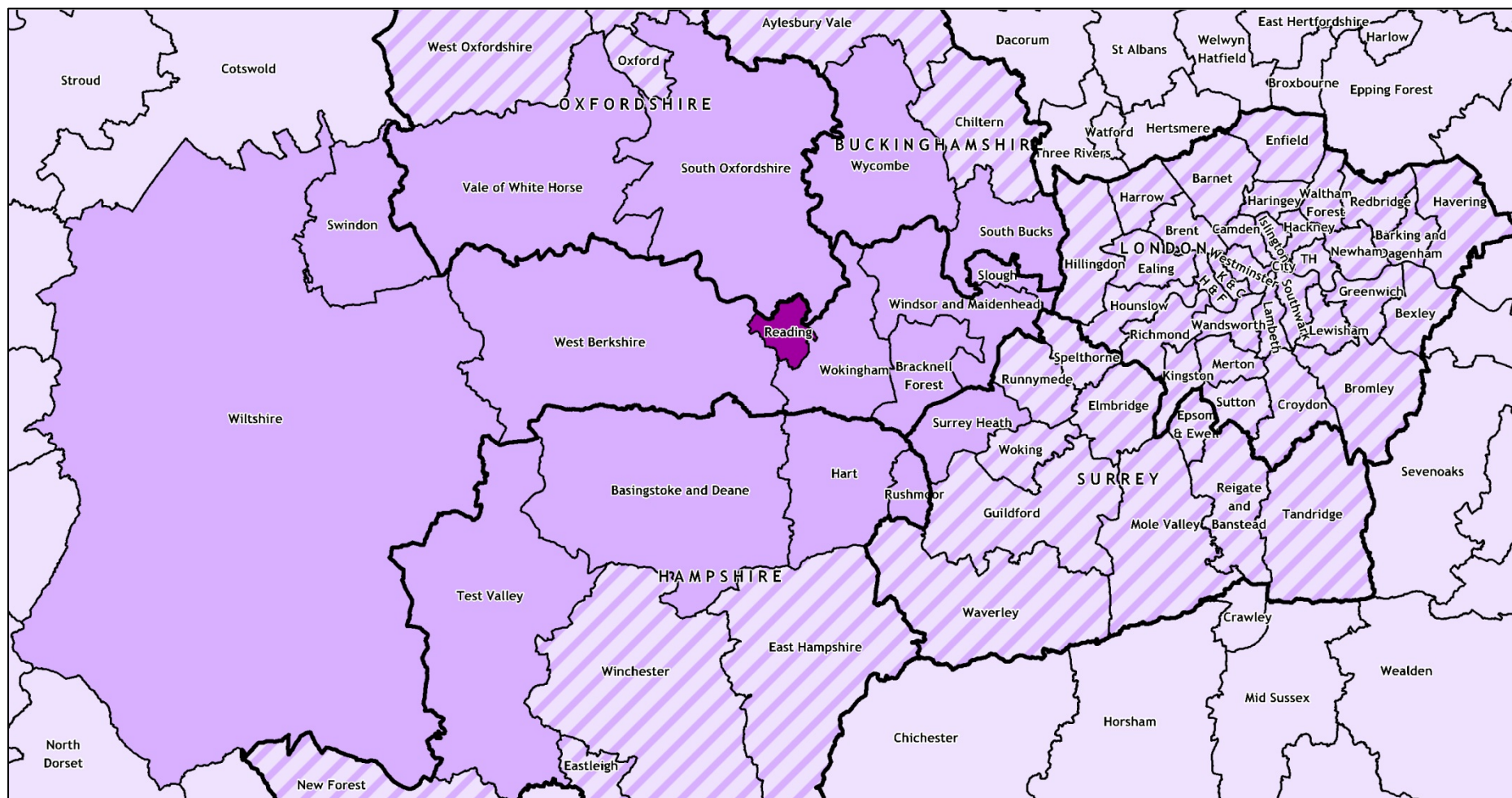
⁵ South Bucks District Council intends to produce a joint Local Plan with Chiltern District Council. This may mean that co-operation with South Bucks may also entail co-operation with Chiltern, or may give rise to duty to co-operate issues between Reading and Chiltern.

2. The Council will need to look in more detail at minerals and waste planning matters at a later stage. Part of the evidence-gathering process will involve identifying those authorities that have significant movements of waste to or from Reading, or which import aggregates to Reading. There may therefore be other local authorities to whom the duty to co-operate will also apply that will be added at a later date.

Appendix 2: Map Showing Local Authorities Identified as Duty to Co-operate Bodies

Authorities identified as duty to co-operate partners are shaded

Authorities that are not specifically identified, but are within an area covered by a strategic planning body that is identified, are hatched.



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Appendix 3: Summary of Responses to the Draft Scoping Strategy

Respondent	Section of Document	Summary of Response	Reading Borough Council response
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Housing needs and provision	As Reading Borough and Bracknell Forest are in the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area it is agreed that this issue relates to Bracknell Forest. We ask to be consulted on this topic area and evidence and policy issues as they progress.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Needs and provision for gypsies and travellers	Joint work has been undertaken on a Berkshire methodology for undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA's). It is confirmed that this issue relates to Bracknell Forest and we ask to be consulted on this topic area and evidence and policy issues as they progress.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Needs and provision for economic development and town centres	Bracknell Forest Council has undertaken work to define its Functional Economic Area (FEA). The 'core' FEA extends to include Reading Borough Council. Therefore it is considered there are strong links and potential opportunities for joint working with Reading. We agree this issue relates to Bracknell Forest, and ask to be consulted on employment and retail evidence and policy issues as they progress.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Strategic transport infrastructure needs and provision	Due to on-going strategic transport issues such as the M4, and routes in and out of Bracknell Forest, we confirm that this issue relates to Bracknell Forest. We ask to be consulted on associated evidence and policy issues as they progress.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Climate change and mitigation	We confirm this issue relates to Bracknell Forest. We ask to be consulted on this topic area and evidence and policy issues as they progress.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Planning for minerals	Joint work is likely to be undertaken on Minerals with Reading Borough, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough. As such this may not be a duty to cooperate issue for the Local Plan, depending on whether or not a joint plan is progressed. In the meantime, we confirm that this issue relates to Bracknell Forest and that the Council may need to be consulted on this topic area.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Planning for waste	Joint work is likely to be undertaken on Waste with Reading Borough, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham Borough. As such this may not be a duty to cooperate issue for the Local Plan, depending on whether or not a joint plan is progressed. In	Noted. No change needed.

		the meantime, we confirm that this issue relates to Bracknell Forest and that the Council may need to be consulted on this topic area.	
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2 - Strategic healthcare infrastructure needs and provision	In addition to the above areas it is considered that Bracknell Forest Council should also be consulted on 'strategic healthcare infrastructure needs and provision' as the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading is used by residents from Bracknell Forest.	Agreed. Change proposed. Bracknell Forest Borough Council should be added to the list of organisations to whom 'strategic healthcare infrastructure needs and provision' relates.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	Section 2	For the avoidance of doubt, we confirm that we do not need to be consulted on strategic education infrastructure needs and provision; strategic landscape considerations; strategic biodiversity considerations; open space and recreation provision; historic environment; tall buildings and strategic views; utilities infrastructure needs and provision; University of Reading or planning within the consultation zones of AWE.	Noted. No change needed.
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	General	We welcome the opportunity for on-going discussion relating to the preparation of your Local Plan, and ask to be kept informed of any future consultations on the Plan and evidence base as highlighted above.	Noted. No change needed.
Environment Agency	Section 2	We are interested in the following topics you have highlighted in the Strategic Matters in section 2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic biodiversity considerations • Strategic flooding considerations • Climate change and mitigation • Planning for minerals • Planning for waste 	Noted. Change proposed. The Environment Agency should be added to the list of bodies to whom 'strategic biodiversity considerations' and 'planning for minerals' apply.
Environment Agency	Appendix 1	In Appendix 1 you have ticked the topics that key stakeholders would be involved in. We are pleased that you have included us in the following topics: Strategic flooding considerations Climate change and mitigation Planning for waste However we also need to be included in: Strategic biodiversity considerations - Section 2.9.1 discusses habitats and wildlife corridors. This should include river corridors and there are many main rivers within Reading. Therefore we have an interest in this	Noted. Change proposed. The Environment Agency should be added to the list of bodies to whom 'strategic biodiversity considerations' and 'planning for minerals' apply.

		<p>topic.</p> <p>Planning for minerals - We also have an interest in the location of minerals sites in terms of flood risk, groundwater quality and groundwater resources.</p>	
Guildford Borough Council	General	Agree that there are no specific strategic issues requiring co-operation.	Noted. No change needed.
Hart - Rushmoor - Surrey Heath HMA and FEMA	Section 2 - Housing and Economic Needs	We agree with the statements made in the Scoping Document but emphasise that at present we do not anticipate a need to work together on these issues. At present the assumption is that housing and economic needs will be met with respective HMA/FEA areas.	Noted. No change needed.
Hart - Rushmoor - Surrey Heath HMA and FEMA	2.4 - Strategic Transport Infrastructure Needs and Provision	We are content to be listed as a potential partner at this stage, although at present there appears to be no indication of strategic transport requirements that merit collaborative working between Reading and HRSH.	Noted. No change needed.
Hart - Rushmoor - Surrey Heath HMA and FEMA	2.12 - Climate Change and Mitigation	We query whether in practice this is a relevant DtC issue between our areas. We suggest we are all removed from this issue.	Noted. No change needed. We agree that in practice there may not be any matters to discuss, but, as set out in paragraph 2.12.1, it is difficult to define the limits of who should be involved in this matter. We therefore intend to keep the list as it is for the time being.
Highways England	General	We have reviewed the scoping strategy and have no comments. However you may be interested to read the attached document which describes the approach we take to engaging in the planning system and the issues we look at when considering draft planning documents and planning applications: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461023/N150227_-_Highways_England_Planning_Document_FINAL-lo.pdf	Noted. No change needed.
Historic England	General	The activities on which the prescribed bodies are required to co-operate include the preparation of development plan and other local development documents so far as relating to a strategic matter i.e. sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas. Our understanding of the Regulations is that the duty applies in respect of all strategic matters.	Agreed. Change proposed. Whilst there are no other specific issues against which it makes sense to identify Historic England as a potential partner, it is agreed that the strategy could highlight that where other issues have a particular implication for the historic

		<p>However, the National Planning Practice Guidance advises that the prescribed bodies “<i>should be proportionate in how they do this and tailor the degree of cooperation according to where they can maximise the effectiveness of plans</i>”. Historic England confines its involvement in planning issues to matters that involve or otherwise affect the historic environment. Historic England’s duty to co-operate is therefore appropriate in respect of strategic matters that would involve or otherwise affect the historic environment, including the heritage assets therein.</p> <p>We therefore agree that it would be appropriate for Historic England to be identified as a partner organisation for the issues of “constraints” and the “historic environment”, such as where these are strategic matters.</p> <p>We would, however, highlight that the other issues may also have implications for the historic environment. We will, of course, be able to express any views we may have on such implications during the consultation periods on the Local Plan, but we would ask that if discussions are to be held about other issues that have a specific implication for the historic environment, we be invited to participate.</p>	environment, co-operation with Historic England will be required.
Historic England	Section 2	We would also emphasise our willingness to work with the Council on matters affecting the historic environment that do not fall within the definition of “strategic matter” and therefore are not covered by the duty to co-operate. We would be particularly pleased to liaise with the Council outside the formal consultation periods on the Plan. We therefore welcome paragraphs 2.13.1 and 2.14.2 of the Strategy.	Noted. No change needed.
Historic England	General	<p>We would also be pleased to give a presentation or run a workshop for your members and/or for the Berkshire Development Plans Group (earlier this year we gave a presentation to the Hampshire Development Plans Group) on the historic environment in local plans if this would be helpful. You might also find our revised Good Practice Advice Note: 1: “The Historic Environment in Local Plans” helpful (available on the Historic England website: http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa1-historic-environment-local-plans/).</p>	Noted. No change needed.
London Borough of Hounslow	General	No comments to make.	Noted. No change needed.

Elmbridge Borough Council	General	<p>Given the geographical distance between Elmbridge and Reading, it is unlikely that there will be any cross-boundary strategic planning matters arising from the new Reading Local Plan that require our cooperation.</p> <p>It appears that Reading Borough Council is seeking to address those strategic issues which are most common to all authorities e.g. the provision of housing, employment, retail, and addressing infrastructure requirements etc. and is also proposing to update its evidence base in relation to those matters where appropriate.</p> <p>We are supportive of the approach being taken by Reading Borough Council to scope from the outset of its plan preparation the strategic matters which need to be addressed and who it needs to work/engage with to address them. However, as discussed you may need to consult the GLA if you have engaged a number of London Boroughs.</p>	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The Mayor of London has now been consulted on this scoping strategy.</p>
Mayor of London	Section 2 - Housing Needs and Provision	<p>Whilst no part of London formally sits within Reading's Housing Market Area, the area may nevertheless be influenced by migration flows from beyond its boundaries including from London. In the same way London's Housing Market Area extends beyond the capital's boundaries, although the London Plan is designed to meet London's needs in planning terms within its boundaries. The principle underlying the London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is devolved from national guidance, but the Mayor is concerned that the use of CLG's household projections (which are not based on longer-term (10-year) migration trends) may not take account of potentially higher pre-recession migration levels out of London, which may again be experienced in the future.</p>	<p>Agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>The Berkshire SHMA has taken account of the assumptions about migration from London made in developing the London Plan, so does not rely solely on CLG projections.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the migration relationship with London is potentially a significant strategic issue, particularly in view of Crossrail, and should be identified in the Strategy.</p>
Mayor of London	Section 2 - Needs and provision for economic development and town centres	<p>As set out in paragraph 2.3.1 of the Scoping Paper, economic development and housing need are 'intrinsically linked'. Therefore, economic development should also be regarded as a strategic matter for co-operation. In addition, paragraph 2.3.1 explains that 'Reading's reach as a location to work goes beyond the Berkshire authorities'. In more general terms, Reading is the largest city in close proximity to the west of London with a substantial level of economic activities and significant attractiveness for inward investment. It sits within an economic wedge/corridor extending from west London into the Thames Valley. These economic linkages might usefully be explored further.</p>	<p>Agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>As set out above, there is a need to change to strategy to recognise the links with London.</p>
Mayor of London	Section 2 - Strategic transport	<p>The above mentioned economic linkages are also reflected in substantial transport infrastructure connections and commuter patterns. In addition, paragraph 2.4.2 of the Scoping Paper recognises</p>	<p>Agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>Due to the strategic transport connections with</p>

	infrastructure needs and provision	that 'strategic transport infrastructure needs should be considered across a wide area'. The Strategic Economic Plan of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership indicates that 'the importance of the area's links with London cannot be overstated - particularly through the M4 motorway, the Great Western Mainline and the Reading to Waterloo Mainline'.	London (including the arrival of Crossrail) it makes sense to include the Mayor as a duty to co-operate partner.
Mayor of London	Section 3	<p>In terms of co-operation process, I would in addition like to draw your attention to our officer-level Strategic Spatial Planning Liaison Group, in which representatives from across the wider South East are meeting regularly to discuss high-level strategic issues. Further information on this group can be found at: https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/london-plan/cross-boundary-strategic-planning-co-operation.</p> <p>To complement the engagement at officer level, back in March 2015, jointly with the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) and South East England Councils (SEEC), the Mayor held a wider South East Summit for politicians to explore better strategic collaboration. Following the Summit, Roundtable discussions were set up and took place over the summer to progress political discussions. Leaders from all councils within the wider South East and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) representatives were invited, and attendees at all Roundtable sessions supported the need for better political engagement. A second Wider South East Summit has now been arranged for 11 December 2015 to agree better collaboration arrangements, arrangements that would focus on the 'big strategic picture', with an initial prioritisation of housing need and transport investment issues. Again, Leaders from all councils and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) representatives have been invited.</p>	<p>Noted. Change proposed.</p> <p>These existing groupings should be referenced in Section 3.</p>
Natural England	General	The Plan should thoroughly assess the potential for the proposal to affect designated sites. European sites (e.g. designated Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) fall within the scope of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. In addition paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, listed or proposed Ramsar sites, and any site identified as being necessary to compensate for adverse impacts on classified, potential or possible SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites be treated in the same way as classified sites.	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The plan itself will need to consider these issues, and this is integrated with the Sustainability Appraisal process as set out in our Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.</p>

		<p>Under Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 an appropriate assessment needs to be undertaken in respect of any plan or project which is (a) likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and (b) not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site.</p> <p>Should a Likely Significant Effect on a European/Internationally designated site be identified or be uncertain, the competent authority (in this case the Local Planning Authority) may need to prepare an Appropriate Assessment.</p>	
Natural England	General	The Plan area is within the 5-7km avoidance and mitigation zone for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), and should make reference to and pay due regard to relevant policies namely NRM6.	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue, although the Duty to Co-operate Scoping Strategy does not need to highlight this as a specific issue.</p>
Natural England	General	The Plan will need to consider any impacts upon local wildlife and geological sites. Local Sites are identified by the local wildlife trust, geoconservation group or a local forum established for the purposes of identifying and selecting local sites. They are of county importance for wildlife or geodiversity. The Plan should therefore include an assessment of the likely impacts on the wildlife and geodiversity interests of such sites. In line with e.g. Para. 114 of the NPPF, Local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. Furthermore in line with para. 117 the Plan should set out how it has minimised impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, and set planning policies to plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale across local authority boundaries. Contact the local wildlife trust, geoconservation group or local sites body in this area for further information.	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth. The Berkshire Local Nature Partnership is an identified duty to co-operate body, whilst the local wildlife trust is a key consultee who will be involved in the plan preparation process.</p>
Natural England	General	The Plan should assess protected species (including, for example, great crested newts, reptiles, birds, water voles, badgers and bats). Natural England does not hold comprehensive information regarding the locations of species protected by law, but advises on the procedures and legislation relevant to such species. Records of protected species should be sought from appropriate local biological record centres, nature conservation organisations, groups and individuals; and consideration should be given to the wider context of the site for	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.</p>

		example in terms of habitat linkages and protected species populations in the wider area. Natural England has adopted standing advice to assist in the process.	
Natural England	General	<p>The Plan should thoroughly assess the impact and enhancement opportunities for habitats and/or species listed as ‘Habitats and Species of Principal Importance’ within the England Biodiversity List, published under the requirements of S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 places a general duty on all public authorities, including local planning authorities, to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Further information on this duty is available in the Defra publication ‘Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty’.</p> <p>The record centre for the relevant Local Authorities should be able to provide the relevant information on the location and type of priority habitat for the area under consideration.</p>	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.</p>
Natural England	General	As part of the Plan boundary is adjacent to the North Wessex Down Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB), consideration should be given to the direct and indirect effects upon this designated landscape and in particular the effect upon its purpose for designation within the environmental impact assessment, as well as the content of the relevant management plan for the AONB.	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The North Wessex Downs AONB is highlighted in 2.8 as an issue, although it should be noted that the Chilterns AONB is actually closer to Reading’s boundary.</p>
Natural England	General	<p>The Plan should consider local landscape character areas and should include assessments of visual effects on the surrounding area and landscape together with any physical effects of the development, such as changes in topography. The European Landscape Convention places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider the impacts of landscape when exercising their functions.</p> <p>In order to foster high quality development that respects, maintains, or enhances, local landscape character and distinctiveness, Natural England encourages all new development to consider the character and distinctiveness of the area, with the siting and design of the proposed development reflecting local design characteristics and, wherever possible, using local materials.</p>	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.</p>
Natural England	General	Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help encourage people to access the countryside for quiet enjoyment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways are to be encouraged. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.</p>

		should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be incorporated where appropriate.	
Natural England	General	The Plan should consider potential impacts on access land, public open land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on the Thames Paths National Trail which bisects the Plan area. The National Trails website www.nationaltrail.co.uk provides information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts. We also recommend reference to the relevant Right of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP) to identify public rights of way within or adjacent to the proposed site that should be maintained or enhanced.	Noted. No change needed. The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.
Natural England	General	The Plan should be considered in light of the Government's policy for the protection of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land as set out in paragraph 112 of the NPPF. We also recommend that soils should be considered under a more general heading of sustainable use of land and the ecosystem services they provide as a natural resource in line with paragraph 109 of the NPPF.	Noted. No change needed. The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.
Natural England	General	Air quality in the UK has improved over recent decades but air pollution remains a significant issue; for example over 97% of sensitive habitat area in England is predicted to exceed the critical loads for ecosystem protection from atmospheric nitrogen deposition (England Biodiversity Strategy, Defra 2011). A priority action in the England Biodiversity Strategy is to reduce air pollution impacts on biodiversity. The planning system plays a key role in determining the location of developments which may give rise to pollution, either directly or from traffic generation, and hence planning decisions can have a significant impact on the quality of air, water and land. The Plan should take account of the risks of air pollution and how these can be managed or reduced. Further information on air pollution impacts and the sensitivity of different habitats/designated sites can be found on the Air Pollution Information System (www.apis.ac.uk). Further information on air pollution modelling and assessment can be found on the Environment Agency website.	Noted. No change needed. The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.
Natural England	General	The England Biodiversity Strategy published by Defra establishes principles for the consideration of biodiversity and the effects of climate change. The Plan should reflect these principles and identify how the development's effects on the natural environment will be	Noted. No change needed. The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.

		influenced by climate change, and how ecological networks will be maintained. The NPPF requires that the planning system should contribute to the enhancement of the natural environment 'by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures' (NPPF Para 109), which should be demonstrated through the Plan.	
Natural England	General	<p>The S41 list includes six priority woodland habitats, which will often be ancient woodland, with all ancient semi-natural woodland in the South East falling into one or more of the six types.</p> <p>Information about ancient woodland can be found in Natural England's standing advice http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/standing-advice-ancient-woodland_tcm6-32633.pdf.</p> <p>Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource of great importance for its wildlife, its history and the contribution it makes to our diverse landscapes. Local authorities have a vital role in ensuring its conservation, in particular through the planning system. The Plan should have regard to the requirements under the NPPF (Para. 118)2 which states: 'Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.'</p>	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The local plan itself will need to consider this issue in more depth.</p>
Office of Rail Regulation	General	<p>We have reviewed your proposals and supporting documents & note that your proposals do not affect the current or (future) operation of the mainline network in Great Britain.</p> <p>It might be helpful if I explain that the office has a number of key functions and duties in our role as the independent regulator of Britain's Railways. If your plans relate to the development of the current railway network including the operation of passenger and freight services, stations, stabling and freight sites (including the granting of track and station access rights and safety approvals) within your administrative area, we would be happy to discuss these with you once they become more developed so we can explain any regulatory and statutory issues that may arise.</p>	Noted. No change needed.
Oxford City Council	General	We would welcome the opportunity for further discussion with you at relevant points in your plan process. Whilst we are not an adjoining	Noted. No change needed.

		<p>authority or in the same housing market area, we feel there are potentially some strategic sub-regional links between the Reading and Oxford, primarily relating to housing and economic growth. We would not anticipate any significant concern in respect of Duty to Cooperate, more a case of simply exploring the links and understanding each authority's respective planning contexts as summarised below.</p> <p>Oxford is part of an Oxfordshire-wide strategic housing market area, as identified in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014). So whilst Oxford does not share a direct border with Reading, the strategic housing market area that we are part of, does border and even slightly overlap with the Reading housing market area and we note that your Scoping Strategy, paragraph 2.1.4, identifies linkages of the housing market area with Henley and Sonning Common. Furthermore, with both cities bordering South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), and both cities unlikely to be able to meet their own objectively-assessed need in full, there is potentially a situation where both areas look to SODC to help accommodate unmet need. Oxford City Council is already engaged with all the Oxfordshire districts in a process to agree how unmet need will be distributed and met across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. So whilst your note identifies that you currently do not anticipate seeking any unmet need to be met in SODC, we would welcome further dialogue in the event that that position or evidence base changes.</p> <p>We would also propose that setting up an informal on-going dialogue could be of benefit to both authorities, in terms of simply exploring the commonalities and issues that the authorities face from being the only two major cities within the sub-region, and each surrounded by primarily rural districts which tend to face quite different planning challenges. There may be processes and planning solutions where we can both learn from the other's experiences. Examples might include meeting housing need in a constrained city, student accommodation, and of course the issue of affordable housing provision that we supported your High Court Challenge on earlier this year.</p>	<p>It is agreed that there is value in a continuing dialogue with Oxford City Council, which has proven fruitful on occasion in the past. We are happy to explore how this dialogue might continue.</p> <p>In terms of housing needs, the first preference is to meet the needs within the Housing Market Area where they arise, but it is agreed that should the situation change, the potential partners may also change. The Scoping Strategy should therefore be kept under review.</p>
Oxfordshire County Council	Section 2	<p>We welcome and support the inclusion of 'planning for minerals' and 'planning for waste' as strategic matters in Section 2. We also welcome and support the identification of Oxfordshire County Council as a relevant duty to co-operate body in Appendix 1. This recognises that there are significant flows of minerals and waste between our two authority areas, in particular sand and gravel from Oxfordshire to</p>	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p>

		<p>Reading and non-hazardous waste from Reading to Oxfordshire.</p> <p>We note that Reading Borough Council does not intend to address minerals or waste within the forthcoming local plan but instead wishes to work jointly with neighbouring authorities on plan making for minerals and waste; and that, as such, the strategy for undertaking the duty to co-operate is not yet fully developed. We have no comments to make on the way in which the Borough Council wishes to approach plan making for minerals and waste but we look forward to seeing a more developed duty to co-operate strategy for these matters soon, in advance of consultation on a new local plan (or plans) for minerals and waste.</p>	
Oxfordshire County Council	Section 3	The content of Section 3 on mechanisms for co-operation is generally welcomed but in relation to minerals and waste we would like to see a commitment from Reading Borough Council to continued membership of and participation in the South East England Aggregate Working Party and the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group.	<p>Noted. No change needed.</p> <p>The Council is currently a member of both SEEAWP and SEWPAG, and has no current intention to change that.</p>
Oxfordshire County Council	Paragraph 3.1.8	In paragraph 3.1.8, Oxfordshire County Council should be included alongside South Oxfordshire District Council as a neighbouring authority that is 'not part of existing arrangements' but with which 'there are likely to be a number of specific cross-boundary issues that will require co-operation' (in particular minerals and waste).	<p>Agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council will be specifically identified in this paragraph.</p>
Runnymede Borough Council	General	There is no need for specific co-operation between our respective authorities on any strategic matter identified.	Noted. No change needed.
South Bucks District Council	Paragraph 1.2.1	Assume you mean "identify key duty to co-operate relationships to scope" the issues. It is assumed that this report itself will not "identify" the issues	<p>Partially agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>The meaning of this paragraph is that the Strategy will identify those issues that are strategic matters and therefore subject to the duty to co-operate. The text should be amended to reflect that.</p>
South Bucks District Council	Paragraph 1.2.2	I note from your e-mail that your Council intends to finalise the attached paper. Understanding from paras 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 is that this will not necessarily be the case, which is supported. It is suggested that although intended to be finalised the Strategy should be reviewed if needed during the local plan process such as to take account of potential Government proposals to streamline plan-making and the Duty, in the light of evidence and other possible changes in	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Duty to Co-operate Scoping Strategy will be kept under review and revised during the plan process if necessary. It is correct that it is not necessarily therefore a 'final' version.</p>

		circumstance (e.g. changes in regional infrastructure proposals/funding and LEP investment proposals).	
South Bucks District Council	Paragraph 2.1.3	Please note that the conclusion of a Bucks study defines a Slough and Reading HMA and FEMA comprising all six Berkshire authorities and South Bucks. It is considered that this conflict of evidence should be noted particularly as it will provide a context for South Bucks duty to co-operate discussions with all of the Berkshire local authorities	Agreed. Change proposed. The text can be changed to additionally reflect the conclusions of the Bucks study, although it is not agreed that the evidence is necessarily incompatible.
South Bucks District Council	Paragraph 2.1.3	Your council will be aware that South Bucks is considering undertaking a joint local plan with Chiltern District Council and have consulted your Council on the HMA definition implications if a joint plan is to be prepared. It is suggested that reference is made to this.	Partially agreed. Change proposed. It is agreed that South Bucks' intention to produce a joint local plan with Chiltern is a relevant matter for the Scoping Strategy to refer to, as it can affect how duty to co-operate discussions take place. However, it is not agreed that this in itself changes the realities of the HMA boundaries, and this is therefore best referred to elsewhere in the document.
South Bucks District Council	Paragraph 3.1.8	It is suggested that specific reference should also be made to South Bucks given the current position of the Berkshire HMA definitions.	No change needed. It is agreed that this paragraph could well apply to South Bucks, but it makes sense to make specific reference to South Oxfordshire here, given the unique situation of the immediate boundary skirting the Reading urban area, but not being part of the same HMA grouping. The number of issues that will require co-operation between Reading and South Oxfordshire are particularly extensive, and might even involve discussions on individual sites.
South Bucks District Council	Appendix 1 - Housing Needs and Provision	Does "provision" relate to levels of planned housing in the local plan? If it does not include "distribution" duty to co-operate discussions across a wider area then it is suggested that this needs to be a new item and to include South Bucks. If it is included then it would be helpful to clarify this.	Agreed. Change proposed. The text in 2.1.1 will be revised to clarify that 'distribution' is included within 'provision'.
South Bucks District Council	Appendix 1 - Needs and Provision for Economic	It might be worth splitting economy and retail given that the FEMA and retail catchment areas could potentially be different.	Noted. No change needed. Whilst the FEMA is potentially a different area from the retail catchment, there is still a zone of

	Development and Town Centres		influence of economic development in Reading which is likely to extend beyond the FEMA. This should be reflected in duty to co-operate discussions.
South Bucks District Council	Appendix 1	Question - should you also include adjacent LEPs?	<p>No change needed.</p> <p>It is not considered that there is a need to identify adjacent LEPs at this stage, as it is not clear that there are specific issues needing to justify it. However, the Council will be open to co-operation with those LEPs if issues arise during the plan-making process that require it.</p>
South Bucks District Council	Appendix 2	If South Bucks is to prepare a joint plan with Chiltern (decision on 10th November) this it is suggested this is recognised in the map.	<p>Partially agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>It is agreed that South Bucks' intention to produce a joint local plan with Chiltern is a relevant matter for the Scoping Strategy to refer to, as it can affect how duty to co-operate discussions take place. However, it is not agreed that the map should change as it is a map of the relevant local authorities rather than plan areas.</p>
Spelthorne Borough Council	General	Agree that there are no specific strategic issues requiring co-operation. Spelthorne has published its own DtC Framework paper following a scoping exercise which did not identify any strategic matters with Reading Borough either.	Noted. No change needed.
Swindon Borough Council	General	<p>You not identified Swindon as an authority for a need for specific co-operation on any strategic matters. Anecdotally, and now confirmed by Census data, there has been a significant increase in commuting from Swindon to Reading. In 2011 663 persons lived in Swindon Borough and Worked in Reading with a net flow of 308 to Reading. We suspect the reason being the relative cheapness of housing in Swindon compared to Reading. Also with electrification of the GWR mainline we may find that Swindon becomes a more attractive place to commute from. At this stage I feel it would be sensible to include Swindon Borough on the schedule of strategic issues (Appendix 1) as the same as Wiltshire Council, even if through further research and analysis they are not deemed significant.</p> <p>For information, we have recently commissioned jointly with Wiltshire Council a SHMA to underpin our respective Local Plan reviews to 2036.</p>	<p>Agreed. Change proposed.</p> <p>It makes sense to include Swindon on the same topics as Wiltshire, as despite not directly adjoining the Western HMA, there are more people closer to Reading in Swindon's area than Wiltshire, with strong rail links between the two areas.</p>

		This is due to report in April 2016.	
Waverley Borough Council	General	No comments to make.	Noted. No change needed.
Wiltshire Council	General	Agree with the main strategic issues identified in the paper. Provision for gypsies and travellers will also be relevant. Document is a useful and accessible format.	Agreed. Change proposed. We are happy to include gypsies and travellers as a strategic issue at this stage. More evidence will need to be undertaken that will inform whether there are cross boundary issues affecting Wiltshire.
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main strategic issues identified by RBC appear appropriate and accord in all significant respects with those previously identified by RBWM. • The approach proposed by each authority towards engagement under the Duty to Cooperate is similar and appears compatible. • RBWM looks forward to continuing and positive cooperation with RBC. 	Noted. No change needed.
Wokingham Borough Council	General	Of the 18 strategic matters, the Scoping Strategy identifies that Wokingham Borough Council will be a relevant duty to co-operate body on all matters except for the 'Historic Environment'. Wokingham Borough Council is in agreement with the approach taken in this document. WBC is already working with Reading and the other Berkshire authorities on certain areas including the need for housing. WBC welcomes the duty to cooperate discussions on the identified areas.	Noted. No change needed.
Wycombe District Council	Section 2	Wycombe District Council will be particularly interested in any HMA / FEMA and retail discussions as well as key strategic transport infrastructure issues.	Noted. No change needed.

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Reading
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