

# READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Adopted November 2019



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**Reading**  
Borough Council  
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## FOREWORD

By Councillor Tony Page

*The Local Plan is the document that guides development in Reading up to 2036, and it will therefore play a decisive role in how our town evolves over the next two decades. It will be the main point of reference for anyone wishing to undertake new buildings, changes or developments within Reading over that period.*



*This plan has been carefully developed to address some of the key issues facing Reading. In particular, this Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and set out its commitment to work towards achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030. We must therefore ensure that new development only takes place where it can help us in achieving that aim. The Local Plan contains sustainability policies that put it at the cutting edge of authorities across the country. We are proud in Reading to be in the top 5% of local authorities in Britain for cutting carbon emissions and the Local Plan will play a major part in building upon that success.*

*Over recent years, Reading has had great economic success, and this has resulted in considerable investment in the town. However, this success brings its own issues. In particular, Reading faces an acute housing crisis. There are not enough homes in general, and there is a particular need for genuinely affordable housing which represents more than half of our overall assessed housing need. The Local Plan is a major part of our response to this issue, and we continue to work with neighbouring councils to look at the needs of the Reading area as a whole.*

*Other critical issues to be considered include how to provide the employment space and supporting infrastructure to make sure that Reading continues to be an attractive place in which to work, to live and to study. The benefits of Reading's economic success also need to be shared out more equally with those communities in Reading that suffer high levels of deprivation and social exclusion.*

*The Plan also takes a positive approach to conserving and enhancing Reading's considerable but, in the past, often overlooked historic legacy. Reading has some truly significant historic sites, some of which are identified for future use and enhancement as part of this Plan. Improving Reading's environment is a major part of the Plan, both in terms of revitalising tired and run-down sites and areas, and in preserving those elements that are essential to our residents' quality of life.*

*This Plan will ensure that our town remains a great place in which to live, work and play for people living here now - and in the future. It provides an excellent basis for delivering on our Climate Emergency Declaration earlier this year, and achieving a sustainable and prosperous future for Reading.*



Tony Page

Deputy Leader, Reading Borough Council and  
Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport

- 4.5.14 It is important to ensure that proposals will not interfere with the free flow of traffic on the highway and that there would be no risk to the safety of people using that road including vulnerable groups such as pedestrians (including mobility-impaired users), cyclists and motorcyclists. The proximity of other accesses is also significant. In particular, creating new access points onto the Classified Highway Network, or changing the nature of an existing access or the type of traffic using the access, is likely to bring about risks to the safety of road users and increase traffic volumes. Where an existing area of the network already exceeds its operational capacity, proposals involving a new site access and/or additional trips likely to worsen the existing situation will not normally be permitted, unless the proposals provide improvements to the transport infrastructure which significantly reduce the effects of potential private car borne trips on the network.
- 4.5.15 The Council has produced a policy on accesses, which deals particularly with residential accesses onto classified roads, and commercial accesses onto all adopted roads<sup>95</sup>. The policy, adopted in 2011, endorses the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (for lightly trafficked roads within urban areas) and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (for access and junction improvements to classified roads from residential developments and to the entire road network for commercial developments). It is too detailed to reproduce here, but compliance with it, or any replacement, is essential. It follows national guidance that avoids access onto main roads wherever possible.
- 4.5.16 The Classified Highway Network is defined by the highways authority, and includes a number of main roads not classified as A or B roads. The Network at the time of this plan is shown on the Proposals Map, but it may change within the plan period, so the Council's website should be checked for the latest position.

## Cycle Routes and Facilities

### **TR4: CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES**

*Developments will be expected to make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development and to integrate cycling through the provision of new facilities. Development of new facilities for cycling, such as cycle hire points and cycle parking, will be acceptable.*

*The cycle routes identified in the most up-to-date Cycling Strategy will be maintained, enhanced and added to or extended. Development will not detrimentally affect an identified cycle route. Where opportunities exist, improvements to that route, including the provision of connecting routes, and/or cycling facilities will be sought within developments or through planning contributions.*

- 4.5.17 Cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of transport, and forms an important part of Reading's transport strategy. Opportunities to continue to promote cycling, and enhance important routes, should be seized.

<sup>95</sup> Geometric Design Guidance for Residential Accesses onto Classified Roads and Commercial Accesses onto Adopted Roads (Version 2), approved July 2011.

- 4.5.18 The Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 is supported by a full Cycling Strategy, published in 2014. This seeks to enhance cycling in Reading through:
- “new and improved cycle infrastructure that will aim to bridge gaps between existing barriers, including the railway and River Thames
  - cycle hire will give people that do not currently have access to a bicycle the opportunity to cycle to key destinations
  - increased cycle parking facilities to enable people to park closer to more key destinations
  - positively promoting the benefits of cycling in a compact urban area such as Reading.”<sup>96</sup>
- 4.5.19 The Cycling Strategy 2014 continues and builds upon the cycle routes developed as part of the 2008 strategy by identifying detailed policies for delivering infrastructure and route improvements for cyclists on the public highway to enhance the routes. The relevant routes are shown on the Proposals Map, and the Policy therefore applies to these routes. If an updated Cycling Strategy or supporting cycle map shows a different network of cycle routes, these will become the routes to which this policy applies.
- 4.5.20 The measures which the strategy identifies in different areas include minor improvements, new links, maintenance, branding and signing. The Cycling Strategy and the development of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will be useful to help identify which improvements are required.
- 4.5.21 In addition, a cycle hire scheme was initially introduced in central, north, south and east Reading in 2014. There is the potential for this scheme to be expanded to key destinations in west Reading during the plan period, and this should be supported, subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan.
- 4.5.22 Reading is working with the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and neighbouring authorities to provide additional strategic cycle routes as part of the NCN (National Cycle Network) and to provide enhanced linkages between the NCN and local cycle routes within the Borough.

### Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

#### **TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING**

***Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.***

***Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points:***

- ***All new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points;***
- ***Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.***

- 4.5.23 Ensuring the appropriate level of car parking in new developments involves striking a careful balance. On the one hand, it is important that enough parking is provided so that there is not a

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1065/Revised-Parking-Standards-and-Design-Supplementary-Planning-Documents-Adopted-October-2011/pdf/Revised-Parking-Standards-And-Design-Supplementary-Planning-DocumentsOct11.pdf>