

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Adopted November 2019



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Reading
Borough Council

Working better with you

- 4.2.84 It may be appropriate in some circumstances for the developer to fund mitigating measures elsewhere, to offset any increase in local pollutant emissions as a consequence of the proposed development. In general, air quality monitoring will be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy, but where there is a specific issue, this may be achieved through the use of a Section 106 agreement for a specific scheme or measure. On particularly significant schemes, low emissions strategies may be required, which comprise a package of measures to reduce the transport impacts⁵⁶.
- 4.2.85 This policy is part of a wide package of measures to tackle air quality in Reading, including policies within the transport section of this plan on promotion of sustainable travel. The Air Quality Action Plan 2015⁵⁷ includes transport, planning and other measures to both tackle existing sources, and to promote behavioural change to reduce air pollution. As the Council reviews its approach to air quality, it may be necessary to produce a Supplementary Planning Document that provides more detail on how the policy will be achieved, particularly in the construction phase.

Pollution and Water Resources

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

Development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors through land, noise or light pollution; where it would result in no deterioration in, or ideally enhance, ground and surface water quality; and where adequate water resources, sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure will be in place to support the proposed development prior to occupation.

Proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution.

Development will only be permitted on land affected by contamination where it is demonstrated that the contamination and land gas can be satisfactorily managed or remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the groundwater environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.

- 4.2.86 The effective protection of the environment is a key aspect of sustainable development, and reducing pollution is one of the core planning principles in the NPPF. This policy prevents harmful development, mitigates the impact of potentially polluting developments and ensures that developments and receptors that are sensitive to pollution are separated from sources of such pollution. Sensitive receptors can include particularly sensitive uses, as well as sensitive features such as source protection zones or groundwater aquifers.
- 4.2.87 Air quality is dealt with in Policy EN15, but there are other pollution issues in Reading, such as the fact that some ground and surface waters are experiencing a degree of pollution. It is therefore important to ensure that future development does not result in any further deterioration of water quality and, where possible, results in an improvement in overall quality

⁵⁶ Low Emissions Strategies (Beacons Low Emission Strategies Group, 2008) <http://www.lowemissionstrategies.org/>

⁵⁷ On the Council's website: http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/6389/Air-Quality-Action-Plan/pdf/AQAP_Update_2016.pdf

to help to achieve 'good' status in line with the Water Framework Directive. In line with the predicted level of new development within Reading, it will be important to ensure that this does not place an undue burden on existing water resources or result in a deterioration in potential yield of surface and ground water resources. In order to improve the quality of life of those living and working within Reading, it is important to avoid any detrimental impact from development in the form of noise and light pollution.

- 4.2.88 There are a number of sites affected by contamination within the Borough as a result of previous land uses. In order to make the most effective use of previously developed land within Reading, it will be important to ensure that, where possible, such land is remediated through the development process so that it is suitable for redevelopment. Where a development is known to be on historic contaminated land or contamination could be an issue, the application will not be approved unless it is supported by proportionate but sufficient site investigation information in a risk assessment. This will need to determine the existence or otherwise of contamination, its nature and extent, the risks it may pose and to whom/what (the 'receptors') so that these risks can be assessed and satisfactorily reduced to an acceptable level⁵⁸. The risk assessment should also identify the potential sources, pathways and receptors ('pollutant linkages') and evaluate the risks. This information will enable the local planning authority to determine whether further more detailed investigation is required, or whether any proposed remediation is satisfactory, requiring a remediation plan and verification report. A risk assessment of land affected by contamination should inform an Environmental Impact Assessment if one is required. Some buildings, particularly tall buildings, may require piling. In some instances, due to contamination, piling may not be suitable unless remediation is carried out to a suitable standard to protect the Principal Aquifer. Early pre-application engagement with the Council and Environment Agency is strongly advised.
- 4.2.89 The Council has a Contaminated Land Strategy (2011)⁵⁹ in place which sets out how it intends to identify contaminated land across the Borough and remove the potential for significant harm. Addressing contamination on proposed development sites is therefore only part of a wider approach to the issue.
- 4.2.90 Exposure to high levels of noise can have a significant effect on human health. This policy deals with noise issues in general, whilst policy EN17 deals particularly with noise-generating equipment. It is worth noting that there is a Professional Practice Guide on Planning and Noise available⁶⁰ which provides guidance on design of residential developments to take account of noise, and taking account of this from the early design stage will help to reduce noise effects on future residents.
- 4.2.91 The provision of adequate water, wastewater and sewerage infrastructure is critical, and needs to be in place prior to occupation. A Utilities Statement is required for all major development at application stage, and this will need to include the outcome of consultation with the sewerage undertaker. Where there is a capacity constraint and improvements in off-site infrastructure are not programmed, the developer should set out how the infrastructure improvements will be completed prior to occupation of the development. The use of private

⁵⁸ See DEFRA policy companion document considering the use of 'Category 4 Screening Levels' in providing a simple test for deciding when land is suitable for use and definitely not contaminated (<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=0&ProjectID=18341>)

⁵⁹ <http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1233/Contaminated-Land-Strategy/pdf/Contaminated-Land-Strategy.pdf>

⁶⁰ IOA, ANC & CIEH (2017) <http://ioa.org.uk/sites/default/files/14720%20ProPG%20Main%20Document.pdf>