

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Adopted November 2019



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Reading
Borough Council

Working better with you

sewage disposal facilities within publicly sewered areas will only be acceptable if the applicant can demonstrate that the additional cost of connecting to the sewer would be unreasonable, connection is not practically feasible or the proposed private sewerage system would provide additional environmental benefits that would outweigh the potential environmental risks.

Noise Generating Equipment

EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT

Where noise generating equipment is proposed, the noise source specific⁶¹ level (plant noise level) should be at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

- 4.2.92 The Local Plan proposals will see a high level of development within Reading. Reading is a densely populated town with many new planning developments taking place. Residents live in close proximity to commercial activities, therefore it is important to minimise background creep in order to protect the noise environment and maintain quality of life for people living and working in the town. The negative impact of environmental noise on health is becoming better understood (for example WHO 1999, 2009 and 2011⁶²).
- 4.2.93 Planning Practice Guidance on noise states that no specific measures are required to manage the acoustic environment in situations where noise can be heard as a result of a development and there is a slight effect on the acoustic character of the area but there is no effect on the behaviour and attitude of people exposed to the noise. However, the guidance also states that:
- The cumulative impacts of more than one source of noise should be considered; and
 - In cases where existing noise sensitive locations already experience high noise levels, a development that is expected to cause even a small increase in the overall noise level may result in a significant adverse effect occurring.
- 4.2.94 The Council considers that the above two factors apply due to the town being densely populated and there being a high likelihood of subsequent noise generating plant being installed in a particular location. It is therefore necessary for each planning application for noisy plant to protect the acoustic environment and as far as possible prevent the increase in background noise levels because the cumulative impact of installation of noisy plant which causes an increase in background noise level is likely to lead to an adverse effect.
- 4.2.95 The Planning Practice Guidance on noise also states that local planning authorities may decide to develop specific standards to apply to various forms of proposed development in their area. It cautions against the implementation of fixed thresholds because specific circumstances may justify some variation being allowed. Because this policy sets a noise target in relation to the background noise level, this allows variation of the threshold with the local circumstances because it does not set an absolute noise level that the plant must achieve, it relates it to the local noise level.

⁶¹ The noise source specific level is the measured noise level, as opposed to the rating level, which is the specific level with correction factors included.

⁶² World Health Organisation (WHO) (1999), Guidelines for Community Noise; WHO (2009), Night Noise Guidelines for Europe; WHO (2011), Burden of Disease from Environmental Noise: Quantification of healthy life years lost in Europe

4.2.96 Where the plant noise rating level does not meet this standard, the background noise will increase. When subsequent new plant is added it will be assessed against this higher background level which results in an increasing benchmark against which subsequent new plant is introduced. This leads to an incremental increase in the noise in an area each time new plant is introduced ('background creep'). This policy standard has been applied by Reading Borough Council for a number of years and experience has demonstrated it to be achievable in most cases. In addition, noise control technology is improving, therefore further increasing the achievability of this standard.

Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

EN18: FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Development will be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance, following the Sequential and Exceptions Test set out in the NPPF, and taking into account the effects of climate change. It will consider flooding from all sources, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and sewer flooding. Where development in areas at risk of flooding is necessary, it will not reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater, impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site.

All major developments⁶³ must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards⁶⁴. Smaller schemes are encouraged to incorporate SuDS, where possible. Runoff rates should aim to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. Schemes should ensure that the movement of water through vertical infiltration as well as horizontal run-off does not worsen contamination effects. Wherever possible, SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits, link into the existing Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping and avoid damage to existing significant trees, including through changes to the site hydrology. All new developments in areas of flood risk should give priority to SuDS.

4.2.97 A significant area of land within Reading is at risk of flooding, and this is expected to worsen with the effects of climate change. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken for the Borough⁶⁵. This describes and analyses how the Borough is affected by flood risk and the nature of that risk. The flood plain plays an important role in protecting the built up area of Reading as it accommodates floodwater and reduces the risks of water levels rising and affecting properties in a wider area. This capacity shall not be reduced by development or the raising of land levels. The movement of water across the flood plain is also important, and obstructions to this will place a greater burden on other parts of the flood plain. Even away from the flood plain, inappropriate drainage schemes can exacerbate local flooding problems and increase the amount of water entering watercourses. This results in litter and contamination.

⁶³ 10 or more dwellings or equivalent non-residential or mixed developments

⁶⁴ Sustainable drainage systems non-statutory technical standards <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards>

⁶⁵ See www.reading.gov.uk/readingldf