

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Adopted November 2019



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Reading
Borough Council

Working better with you

offices are integrated into centres at upper floors to ensure diversity and good access to jobs and housing. Exceptional circumstances are those where it can be clearly demonstrated that the only alternative to loss of the unit to any ‘centre use’ is long-term vacancy (e.g. that it could be expected to be vacant for longer than 5 years).

- 4.6.19** Finally, criterion (c) recognises the fact that opportunities for expansion of these centres are relatively rare, and therefore, where they do occur, they should be seized, in order to enhance the role of centres in serving their local communities.
- 4.6.20** Where the policy includes the term ‘consecutive’ under (a) and (b), this includes where units are separated by the entrance to a side-street or footpath, or any other small gap between buildings.
- 4.6.21** References to ‘key frontage’ in this policy, e.g. for proportion of A1/A2 use, will not be capable of being applied where there is a comprehensive development of a centre, or a part of a centre, that significantly alters the frontages. In such a case, developments need to be judged against criterion d) of the policy.
- 4.6.22** This policy does not apply to the town centre of Reading. A different approach is required there, which is dealt with in Policy CR7.

Betting Shops and Payday Loan Companies

RL4: BETTING SHOPS AND PAYDAY LOAN COMPANIES

Proposals for new betting shops or payday loan shops will not be permitted where it would result in three or more betting shops and/or payday loan shops within a 150 metre radius of the application property.

- 4.6.23** Betting shops and payday loan shops were formerly classed as being within the A2 financial and professional use class. However, in April 2015, these uses were taken out of the A2 class to form a new use class in their own right, as sui generis uses. This means that planning permission is now required for a new betting shop or payday loan shop.
- 4.6.24** In changing the use class status of these premises, the Government was responding to concerns about a perceived proliferation in such uses in recent years. An individual premises does not necessarily cause issues on its own, and can make a valuable contribution to the range of facilities in a centre, particularly a smaller centre. However, where the uses start to cluster together, the presence of these premises can exacerbate existing economic problems in local areas, as well as having a detrimental effect on the appearance and character of the area, particularly where the shopfronts are obscured.
- 4.6.25** The policy therefore seeks to prevent the clustering of betting and payday loan shops in order to prevent the adverse effects above. The radius should be measured from the closest part of a shopfront, i.e. where the closest part of two or more existing shopfronts are within a 150m radius of the shopfront of the application premises, permission would generally be refused.