DRAFT INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

Local Plan Partial Update Submission Draft May 2025

Contents

1.   Executive Summary

1.1   This background paper provides further detail with regard to infrastructure requirements and delivery as identified in Section 10.3 of the Submission Draft Partial Update Local Plan.

1.2   The purpose of this Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to identify the key infrastructure required to support growth, resulting from housing and employment allocations during the Plan period to 2041. National planning policy provides the framework for this.

1.3   The approach adopted by Reading Borough Council is to focus on "the necessary infrastructure required to enable growth or support sustainable growth which will require capital expenditure i.e. largely in the form of physical works"[1]. This IDP seeks to make clear what infrastructure is provided, who is going to fund and provide it and how it relates to the anticipated rate and phasing of development.

1.4   Infrastructure delivery will be an ongoing process with local partners to ensure that priorities are properly reflected and provides a mechanism for cooperation between internal and external providers of infrastructure. It will also be important to continue working closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure that infrastructure provision supports development both in the Borough and within the wider Reading area.

1.5   The majority of housing developments will take place on brownfield sites and represent 100 dwellings or fewer. Therefore, in most cases there will not be a requirement for significant infrastructure on a site-by-site basis. The infrastructure schemes will be strategic in nature, serving the impacts of growth from groupings of sites. Where there is need for site-specific infrastructure, this will be addressed and negotiated at the detailed planning stage. The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule identifies key infrastructure requirements for major sites that are known at this time.

1.6   A range of different infrastructure requirements are reviewed in this report, but only infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth has been identified within the delivery schedule in Section 6. These include core transport projects, health provision, additional capacity for primary and secondary education places, open space provision and additional neighbourhood infrastructure.

1.7   This will be a 'living' document, and as such there will be ongoing monitoring of infrastructure requirements and dialogue with infrastructure providers throughout the Plan period. Where required, the Plan will be updated in order to include new priority schemes.

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[1] This aligns with the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy. More detail on CIL and planning obligations can be found on the Council's website at https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/S106-Planning-Obligations-SPD-Adopted-April-2015.pdf

2. Introduction

2.1 A key part of the Local Plan process is ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure to support the spatial development of the Borough and to support and contribute to sustainable communities. Reading Borough Council's Consultation on Scope and Content for the Local Plan Partial Update identifies the spatial strategy, largely carrying forward the existing spatial approach, with key areas for future development. These are:

- An even stronger focus on Central Reading as the primary focus for meeting much of the identified development needs at medium to high density;

- South Reading as a location for meeting much of the remainder of development needs, and the enhancement of links from Central to South Reading;

- Some new development within district/local centres, including more diversity of services and facilities with some increase in densities;

- Limited re-allocation of some areas of employment to housing and supported uses;

- Increasing densities where appropriate in other areas with high levels of accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling; and

- Removal of refences to Grazeley development and revisions to surrounding authorities' spatial strategies based on the most up-to-date information.

Specific potential site allocations are identified within the document.

2.2 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a document which identifies key pieces of infrastructure required to deliver growth. The aim of the IDP is to set out the infrastructure which Reading Borough Council considers will:

- Enable the delivery of growth, i.e. is required before a development or group of developments can take place; and

- Support sustainable growth, i.e. does not necessarily need to be implemented in advance of development but will ensure the maintaining of quality of life for existing and future residents.

2.3 Such infrastructure is either that which is generally paid for through developer contributions and mainstream central or local funding, or that which developers need to provide on new sites, e.g. connections to utilities such as drainage, sewage, gas, electricity and water. The latter is usually privately financed, with costs being recouped from new customers. This IDP focuses on that infrastructure which requires some public funding. As utility infrastructure provision is an important part of overall infrastructure when planning new growth, utility providers have been contacted to identify any specific issues which would impact on the phasing and delivery for specific sites/areas of growth throughout the Plan period. This is reported in Section 5 below. Where there are specific areas of capacity issues, this has been highlighted in the Schedule in Section 6, but no costs have been identified.

2.4 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows local authorities to raise funds from owners and developers to fund strategic infrastructure projects. CIL is the primary mechanism for providing Borough-wide and cross-boundary infrastructure. This IDP is intended to inform CIL spending decisions throughout the Plan period.

2.5 An IDP is a tool to support the Local Plan, used as part of the evidence base. The Plan seeks to identify the infrastructure implications of the growth in housing and jobs to 2041 within Reading Borough and the infrastructure requirements arising from this growth, the associated costs and funding, and how it might be delivered.

2.6 This Plan has been coordinated by the Local Planning Authority and utilises information from a range of sources including service providers within the Council, such as education, transport and housing, and external organisations such as the NHS, Fire and Rescue Service and the Police. Through this engagement, the Council has sought to obtain as much information as possible regarding priorities and projects.

2.7 There will be ongoing liaison with Reading's Economy and Destination Agency (REDA)[2], a multi-agency partnership bringing together organisations from different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at the local level.

2.8 In addition, there is need for the Council to work with neighbouring authorities to ensure a coordinated approach to infrastructure provision. This is not only in terms of liaising with infrastructure providers, but in terms of determining the most suitable locations and scale of future infrastructure, especially for those schemes which may serve more than one local authority.

2.9 Section 3 provides a brief summary of relevant policies and studies which have been used to inform this plan.

2.10 Section 4 identifies the scale of development that needs to be accommodated.

2.11 In Section 5, the IDP details the types of infrastructure requirements by infrastructure category and sets out an overview of relevant strategy, existing provision and capacity, the impact of change and priorities for provision. This will assist in preparing any updates to S106 or CIL guidelines. It also provides background evidence for future funding requirements.

2.12 The majority of proposed developments will consist of less than 100 dwellings on brownfield sites, including intensification of use, and therefore will not usually necessitate the requirement for specific individual infrastructure provision. It is the cumulative impact of smaller development sites that needs to be addressed. There will be some larger sites which may require specific infrastructure. This will be negotiated through the planning process when these sites come forward for development. Section 6 includes an Infrastructure Delivery Schedule which sets out the key strategic infrastructure projects for sub areas of the Borough – South, Central/East, North and West.

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[2] More information about Reading's Economy and Destination Agency can be found at: https://www.visit-reading.com/business

2.13   For some types of infrastructure, such as open space, there are already specific requirements. These are identified within the Local Plan policies and need to be met by future developments.

3. Policy Background, Guidance and Studies

3.1 The production of this IDP and the accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Schedule has been prepared within the framework of national guidance and policy, along with relevant approved cross-boundary work and local policy. Work has been undertaken to establish the scale of different types of development over the plan period. Commissioning of specific evidence to inform infrastructure needs (for instance, transport modelling) accompanies the Local Plan Partial Update as part of the evidence base. The relevant key findings of these studies have been used to inform this Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)[3]

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework refers to local authorities playing a positive role in delivery of infrastructure in order to support the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In paragraph 20, it states:

> *"Strategic polices should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places (to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking), and make sufficient provision[4] for:*
>
> a) *housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
>
> b) *infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
>
> c) *community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and*
>
> d) *conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation."*

3.3 The NPPF identifies supporting sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial units and infrastructure as a core planning principle. Planning policy should seek to address the lack of infrastructure as a potential barrier to growth and investment. The NPPF also highlights the importance of working with neighbouring authorities to develop cross-boundary infrastructure. Guidance that aids in infrastructure delivery should be outlined in a supplementary planning document, such as this IDP. In paragraph 26 it states:

> *"In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere."*

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[3] The National Planning Policy Framework can be accessed on the Government's website at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669a25e9a3c2a28abb50d2b4/NPPF_December_2023.pdf

[4] "*In line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.*"

3.4   Paragraph 158 emphasises that plans should support "appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts."

Planning Practice Guidance[5]

3.5   The Planning Practice Guidance provides detailed guidance for the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.6   Planning Practice Guidance on plan-making[6] states:

"At an early stage in the plan-making process strategic policy-making authorities will need to work alongside infrastructure providers, service delivery organisations, other strategic bodies such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, developers, landowners and site promoters. A collaborative approach is expected to be taken to identifying infrastructure deficits and requirements, and opportunities for addressing them. In doing so they will need to:

- *assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure, and its ability to meet forecast demands. Where deficiencies are identified, policies should set out how those deficiencies will be addressed; and*

- *take account of the need for strategic infrastructure, including nationally significant infrastructure, within their areas."*

Reading Borough Council Local Plan

3.7   In terms of specific policy requirement for infrastructure provision, the relevant policies within the Local Plan Partial Update are as follows:

CC9: Securing Infrastructure

Proposals for development will not be permitted unless infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided through direct provision or financial contributions at the appropriate time.

Employment development should provide mitigation measures in line with its impacts on labour and skills and on the transport network.

In determining appropriate provision or contribution, the highest priority will be given to the following:

- Transport infrastructure, including major cross boundary or sub-regional infrastructure projects;
- Healthcare provision;
- Open space, green infrastructure and other measures to improve or enhance biodiversity;
- Education, including cross-boundary facilities;

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[5] Planning Practice Guidance can be accessed on the Government's website at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

[6] Planning Practice Guidance on plan-making: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making

- Economic development services and infrastructure, including employment, skills and training development initiatives and childcare provision.

    Where relevant a high priority will also be given to the appropriate provision of the following:

    - Energy infrastructure, including decentralised energy projects;

    - Police Service infrastructure.

    Other measures, as follows, should also be considered where a specific need is identified and justified:

    - Community facilities;

    - Leisure facilities;

    - Cultural infrastructure (such as theatres, museums, libraries, archives and heritage sites);

    - Reading Central Area infrastructure and amenities, including public realm and street care enhancements;

    - Environmental improvements outside the Central Area, such as within local centres, including off-site street tree and other tree planting;

    - Measures to tackle poor air quality or for on-going air quality monitoring; and

    - Flood mitigation and prevention measures.

3.8   A change is proposed as part of the Local Plan Partial Update to refer to the need for digital connectivity in Policy CC9 and to move healthcare provision from "high priority" to "highest priority."

Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements

3.9   The Council currently secures infrastructure contributions from developers in two ways. Firstly, it charges the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is a levy charged on development depending on the amount of floorspace and use. Secondly, it agrees legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (referred to as Section 106 agreements) as part of planning permissions which can include both financial and non-financial obligations. Both CIL and S106 agreements are covered by this IDP.

3.10   CIL is paid by developers to the Council according to the Charging Schedule[7] adopted in 2015. The money received from the levy is used to support and manage the impacts of development by funding infrastructure, e.g. transport schemes, open space improvements or new schools. CIL came into force in April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010[8].

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[7] Reading Borough Council's CIL Charging Schedule can be accessed on the Council's website at: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/Community-Infrastructure-Levy-Charging-Schedule-January_2015.pdf
[8] The CIL regulations 2010 can be accessed online at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2010/9780111492390/contents

3.11   CIL funds can be used more flexibly than S106 to fund any infrastructure as defined within the regulations. This IDP will help determine spending priorities for contributions throughout the plan period.

The Berkshire Skills and Business Hub[9]

3.12   The Berkshire Skills and Business Hub (formerly Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is a business-led partnership that contributes to the sustainable economic growth of Thames Valley Berkshire. The Skills and Business Hub has four aims: grow enterprise and innovation, improve the employability and skills of our workforce, encourage international businesses to invest in Thames Valley Berkshire and help to deliver the strategic infrastructure need to support growth. The Skills and Business Hub plays an important role in coordinating stakeholders to secure high-level infrastructure funding, often for cross-boundary projects.

Commercial Development Needs Assessment

3.13   The Council has commissioned a Commercial Development Needs Assessment (CDNA) as part of the Partial Update, which identifies needs for employment, retail, leisure and culture development over the plan period, taking account of any economic changes, including those in relation to the pandemic.

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

3.14   A Reading Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) has been commissioned to understand the extent of the housing needs in Reading over the plan period, including the needs for housing for different groups requiring accommodation. The HNA can be accessed on the Council's website[10].

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)[11]

3.15   Following the results of a housing needs assessment, the Council's HELAA has been updated to examine the potential for accommodating residential and economic development within the Borough. The CDNA and HNA look at the need for new development, whilst the HELAA looks at the capacity for delivering that development.

3.15.1 The HELAA has identified sites and broad locations with potential for development and then assessed development potential, suitability, availability and achievability.

Infrastructure Funding Statements

3.16   The annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)[12] reports on contributions from developments towards infrastructure in Reading. There is a statutory requirement for

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[9] The Skills and Business Hub website can be found at: https://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/
[10] The Housing Needs Assessment can be found here: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/10/Reading-Housing-Needs-Assessment-July-2024.pdf
[11] Main report: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/11/HELAA-Volume-I-Main-Report-2024.pdf and Detailed Tables: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/11/HELAA-Volume-II-Detailed-Tables-2024.xlsx
[12] The most recent IFS (2023 – 2024) can be viewed on the Council's website at: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/12/Infrastructure-Funding-Statement-2023-24.pdf

the Council to publish an IFS covering the financial year (1st April to 31st March) by 31st December after the financial year ends.

3.17   The IFS details financial contributions received, allocated and spent under both CIL and Section 106. It gives information on some of the infrastructure schemes delivered over the year. It also estimates future contributions and details the priorities for spending contributions that are received.

3.18   The IFS highlights specific items of infrastructure that have been delivered in the past year either though CIL or S106 contributions (in whole or in part). It also provides an indication of future income and anticipated future spending priorities for forthcoming contributions.

Other relevant Council strategies

3.20   The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy (2020-2025)[13] and The Carbon Plan (2020- 2025)[14] – The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy and accompanying Carbon Plan were developed by the Reading Climate Change Partnership and the Council. The strategy aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Strategy and the Carbon Plan detail the infrastructure needed to reduce carbon emissions, including the electrification of transport and heat, major retrofitting of existing buildings, significant increases in renewable heat and electricity generation and the use of smart technologies such as batteries and varied time of power use. Existing infrastructure will require changes to maximise resilience during more frequent extreme weather events.

3.21   The Council's Plan (2025 – 2028)[15] – This IDP has been prepared in line with the Corporate Plan's vision and themes. Projects identified in Section 6 reflect the following overarching themes:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading;

- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success;

- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint;

- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children; and

- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future.

3.22   Reading Transport Strategy 2040[16] – Reading is a regional transport hub and the Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) contains the schemes and policies intended to

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[13] The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy (2020-2025) can be viewed on the Reading Climate Change Partnership's website at: https://readingcan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/our-plan-READING-CLIMATE-EMERGENCY-STRATEGY-2020-25-Final.pdf
[14] The Carbon Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at: https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s14715/Appendix%203%20Carbon%20Plan.pdf
[15] The Council's Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at: https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s35099/Reading%20Council%20Plan%202025-28%20FINAL.pdf
[16] The Reading Transport Strategy 2040 can be viewed on the Council's website at: https://www.reading.gov.uk/vehicles-roads-and-transport/transport-strategy/reading-transport-strategy-2040/reading-transport-strategy-2040-draft-for-consultation-june-2023/

improve transport. It reviews current and future movement patterns and identifies opportunities for improving facilities and meeting future travel demand. Major schemes include:

- Multi-modal schemes – enhancements to major transport corridors, cross-Thames travel, connecting neighbourhoods and demand management

- Public transport schemes – Reading West Station and Tilehurst Station upgrades, mobility enhancements, bus rapid transit corridors

- Active travel schemes – public space enhancements, pedestrian routes, cycle routes, travel to school programmes, cycle parking facilities, micro-mobility hire schemes

- Network management schemes – highway management, parking schemes, electric vehicle charging, car clubs, smart city initiatives

- Communication and engagement schemes – marketing, promotion, information, education and initiatives

3.23   Open Spaces Strategy (2007[17], 2018 update note[18]) - The Open Space Strategy (OSS) outlines the Council's approach to management of and investment in recreational public open spaces. Reading's overall amount of public open space is in line with national guidelines, but open spaces are unevenly distributed across the Borough. Because development within the Borough occurs at relatively high density, it is difficult to introduce new areas of public open space without large-scale redevelopment. The perceived quality of public open space varies significantly and many sites could use improvement. The OSS seeks to strengthen existing protection given to open space and bring about additional provision and improvements.

3.24   Reading's Culture and Heritage Strategy (2015 – 2030)[19] seeks to ensure that culture and heritage plays a full role in making Reading a vibrant, tolerant and enjoyable place to live, work or visit. With regard to infrastructure, it aims to 1) develop the cultural infrastructure to meet growth demands and opportunities and 2) conserve and enhance Reading's unique heritage assets.

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[17] The 2007 Open Spaces Strategy can be viewed on the Council's website at:
https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/Reading_Open_Spaces_Strategy.pdf
[18] The Open Spaces Strategy Update Note 2019 may be viewed at the Council's website at:
https://images.reading.gov.uk/2022/03/CD7.11-Reading-Borough-Council-Open-Space-Update-Note-2018.pdf
[19] Reading's Culture and Heritage Strategy (2015 – 2030) can be viewed at the Council's website at
https://images.reading.gov.uk/2020/01/Culture-and-Heritage-Strategy.pdf

4. Growth during the plan period to 2041

4.1 This IDP details the infrastructure required in association with housing and employment growth. This section identifies the amount of development that will take place and the areas where development is expected to be accommodated during the plan period to 2041.

Population and Jobs Borough-wide

4.2 At the time of the 2021 Census, the population of Reading was 174,200.

4.3 The ONS produces forecasts of growth in household numbers that underpins assessments of needs, using either the standard methodology or another approach.

4.4 Reading is a major employment centre. There are more jobs than people in Reading, which means Reading imports workers from other local authority areas. This places a strain on the transport network and housing market.

Location and Nature of Major Changes

4.5 The role of the Local Plan is to provide a spatial strategy and policies to direct growth to the most sustainable locations in line with these major principles:

- Major development should be located in areas of high accessibility;
- Development should be directed to areas in most need of regeneration; and
- Development must have access to efficient and effective public transport.

The Local Plan defines these sustainable locations as the town centre and South Reading. In addition, there is recognition that development will continue on previously developed land and an expectation that there will still be much development which is relatively small scale and piecemeal, including windfall sites.

Housing

4.6 The Local Plan Partial Update sets out the overall levels of housing supply over the plan period to 2041 and proposes the need to plan for an average of approximately 825 dwellings per annum. This IDP focuses on the requirements associated with this growth.

4.8 The Local Plan Partial Update identifies that the broad distribution of residential supply is expected to continue along current patterns for the foreseeable future. Proposed sites for housing allocation to 2041 are split roughly 50% in the centre, 24% in the south and 26% in other areas of the Borough.

4.9 Most development sites will be of less than 100 dwellings and therefore individual sites will not be of a scale to generate demand for significant additional infrastructure on their own, but collectively may affect area-wide infrastructure. Larger sites in the centre and south of the Borough will have a more significant impact on existing infrastructure and there may be some site-specific infrastructure requirements. Relevant sections of the Local Plan identify infrastructure requirements to be

considered. These will be determined once more detailed schemes are development and will be negotiated during the planning process.

Employment

4.10   Reading is a centre of regional economic activity and transport.

- In recent years Reading has recorded strong growth, outperforming regional and national averages.

- There is a strong concentration of jobs in high-value telecoms, IT, professional services and utilities.

- Reading's strong industrial market benefits from access to strategic roads and a 'critical mass' of industrial occupiers and sites.

- Reading benefits from a highly-skilled workforce and market intelligence suggests that the trend of decentralisation from Central London is expected to continue.

4.11   The CDNA has analysed the need for office and industrial space that Reading should accommodate in order to ensure that growth potential is not constrained.

4.12   The overall strategy remains, therefore, to seek additional employment provision in the centre and along the A33 corridor, whilst at the same time allowing the release of a few small areas no longer required for employment use.

4.13   The next section provides a broad assessment and overview of a range of infrastructure requirements that will result from the future scale and location of growth.

5.   Overview of Infrastructure Requirements

5.1   It is vital that the necessary infrastructure is provided to accommodate planned growth to 2041. This section will provide an overview of infrastructure requirements under the overall categories of physical, green, and social and community. This draws on the key findings of studies, discussions with infrastructure providers and other evidence gathering undertaken in relation to adopted and emerging plans.

5.2   Specific discussions have taken place with infrastructure providers to inform this infrastructure plan, as the Local Plan allocates further sites for development. This IDP aims to identify whether and where there are additional or updated infrastructure requirements resulting from the allocations identified.

5.3   This IDP does not intend to set out every piece of infrastructure required for every single site, but rather to identify key strategic pieces of infrastructure that will be required to support sustainable growth within the area.

5.4   As stated in Section 2 above, utility infrastructure requirements are addressed. The utility providers have not raised any insurmountable issues in dealing with the level of development anticipated. Providers did, however, state that there are some areas of the Borough which will require further investigation by developers as proposals come forward. These are reflected in the schedule in Section 6.

5.5   There will be further work required as sites come forward through the development management process to assess specific requirements to enable each. These would be negotiated through the S106 process for site-related requirements on affordable housing, while strategic infrastructure will be funded by CIL. In addition, there will be ongoing review of infrastructure requirements over the plan period. Any significant project needs that arise will be included in the updated versions of the Schedule.

5.6   The infrastructure types included are as follows:

Physical

- Transport
- Water supply
- Wastewater (sewerage and sewerage treatment works)
- Electricity
- Gas
- Waste
- Renewable energy
- Digital infrastructure
- Air quality

Green

- Open space
- Biodiversity

Social and community

- Education (primary and secondary)
- Post-16 further education
- Early years (children's centres and nurseries)
- Community facilities
- Healthcare
- Police
- Fire and rescue
- Housing (adult social care accommodation)
- Economic development
- Leisure – sports
- Culture and tourism

5.7 For each of these sub-categories, the following has been identified (where known):

- Strategy;
- Existing provision and capacity issues;
- Impact of future growth; and
- Priorities for meeting need.

5.8 Key projects are identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Section 6.

Social and community

Physical Infrastructure

Transport

Table 1: Transport Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The Local Plan includes the following Core Transport Infrastructure projects as central to the Council's long-term vision: • Cycle and e-Scooter hire • Low Emission Zone or other demand management scheme • Major repair and improvement projects • Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) schemes • Network management, junction improvements and road safety • New and enhanced Park and Ride sites (also called 'mobility hubs') • Public transport enhancements • Third Thames Crossing • Town Centre access and public realm enhancements • Walking and cycling infrastructure The Borough's fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP)[20], focusses on developing long term transport measures and initiatives which promote an integrated and balanced transport environment capable of supporting Reading's role as a regional transport hub. This document sets the policy context up to 2040. More frequent rolling improvement plans every few years will detail current priority schemes.
Existing provision and capacity issues
The Council continues to work on the projects and programmes identified in the LTP and to secure the necessary funding to achieve these, including funding by way of developer contributions. Funding has been secured from Local Transport Block Grants, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)[21] and Active Travel grants, Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy and the Business Improvement District Fund.
Impact of Future Growth
The Local Plan highlights that the scale of development envisaged during the Plan period will have significant impacts on the transport system and that this would require major investment in all modes of transport. The Core projects form an integral part of the Spatial Strategy and future development depends on the implementation of a range of projects, schemes and programmes. However, Reading's Transport Strategy does not rely solely on the delivery of these core projects to deliver the required outcomes. As part of the Local Plan process, consultants are being commissioned on behalf of RBC to model the level of

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[20] The Reading Transport Strategy can be found on the Council's website at https://www.reading.gov.uk/vehicles-roads-and-transport/transport-strategy/reading-transport-strategy-2040/transport-consultation-supplementary-information/

[21] The Reading Bus Service Improvement Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at: https://www.reading.gov.uk/vehicles-roads-and-transport/transport-strategy/bus-service-improvement-plan/

development envisaged by the Local Plan to assess the impact of the sites identified in the Plan upon the Strategic Road Network. Because the majority of housing development will be in the form of flats with little to no parking, it is anticipated that impacts on car journeys will be limited.
Priorities for Meeting Need
The priorities are to continue with the core projects identified above and any other works identified in local transport plans, which will support the level of overall growth proposed. Site specific requirements emerging from proposals will need to be negotiated at the time of planning applications. A detailed list of projects is identified within the schedule in Section 6.

Water Supply

Table 2: Water Supply Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
Thames Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP24)[22] sets out how they plan to provide water to meet customer's needs until 2075. The draft plan highlights the significant future shortfall in water resources within the area and states the actions needed to maintain the balance between water supply and demand. As statutory water undertaker, Thames Water have a duty to produce a WRMP every five years and to maintain the security of the water supply. The WRMP assesses the following: - Forecasts of future population and properties based on census data,   - Regional spatial strategies and Local Plans,   - Past consumption trends,   - Expected changes in household water use;   - Local authorities' forecasts of future population and household numbers.   Reading is identified as being within an area of serious water stress. As part of Thames Water's five-year business plan (including Asset Management Plans[23]) they advise OFWAT on the funding required to accommodate growth at their treatment works. Thames Water requests the following: - The use of planning conditions to ensure development is not occupied until any necessary water upgrades are in place in order to avoid adverse impacts, such as low/no water pressure, and   - A water efficiency standard of 110l/p/d to be applied to all new residential development through planning conditions and applied through the Building Regulations.
Existing provision and capacity issues
Thames Water recommends that developers engage with them at the earliest opportunity (in line with paragraph 26 of the NPPF) to confirm if capacity exists to serve the development or if upgrades are required for potable water. Thames Water

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[22] The draft WRMP is available at: https://thames-wrmp.co.uk/our-draft-plan/
[23] Thames Water's five year plan can be accessed at: https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/our-five-year-plan

offer a free pre-planning service[24]. It may be necessary for new or upgraded water infrastructure to be provided in respect of individual developments, depending on the type, scale and location. The time to deliver solutions should not be underestimated. For example, local network upgrades take around 18 months to complete and improvements to treatment works can take 3-5 years. From 1 April 2018, network improvements are charged on a per dwelling basis[25].

Impact of Future Growth

Thames Water has assessed a variety of growth scenarios within its WRMP. As the Partial Update progresses, Thames Water will be given an opportunity to assess specific areas of growth and site allocations and to determine if there are any issues of water supply capability. At the time of writing the last Local Plan, for the town centre, it was indicated that water and wastewater network upgrades would be required and that the scale of these upgrades would be determined by location and size and that detailed modelling would need to be undertaken.

Thames Water suggest that with regard to any specific sites, where they have highlighted potential issues of water supply infrastructure capability that the Council state the following: "*Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate water supply capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. In some circumstances it may be necessary for developers to fund studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to an overloading of the existing water infrastructure.*"

Priorities for Meeting Need

Details pertaining to existing capacity issues are forthcoming and will need to be addressed individually on a site-by-site basis by developers and Thames Water as and when proposals are being prepared.

Wastewater

Table 3: Wastewater Infrastructure Needs (Sewerage and Sewage Treatment Works)

Strategy

The Urban Waste Water Treatment (England and Wales) Regulations 1994 regulate the collection and treatment of wastewater for homes and industry. The Regulations affect statutory water and sewerage companies, in Reading's case Thames Water, who own and operate the public sewerage system and treatment works.

Thames Water's business plan sets out proposals to maintain and improve services over a five-year period and is submitted to OFWAT outlining future investment priorities and the likely costs. Thames Water has confirmed that there are no specific plans in this period to upgrade the Sewage Treatment Works in Reading.

Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans[26] (DWMPs) are new long-term plans that will make sure we have a resilient and sustainable wastewater service for the

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[24] More information about Thames Water's preplanning service is available at: https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers

[25] Further details are available at https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/charges

[26] The DWMP can be accessed at https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/drainage-and-wastewater-management

next 25 years and beyond. The DWMP sets out how wastewater systems, and the drainage networks that serve them, are to be extended, improved and maintained to ensure they are resilient against future pressures such as climate change and population growth.

Thames Water requests the following:

- The use of planning conditions to ensure development is not occupied until any necessary water or wastewater upgrades are in place in order to avoid adverse impacts such as sewer flooding or pollution,
- Support for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS),
- That Thames Water is consulted on the discharge or any surface water drainage conditions to ensure that any surface water discharge rates have been agreed and that capacity in the relevant network exists, and
- Requiring the inclusion of positive pumped devices in any basement development that is connected to the drainage network in order to protect the development from risks of sewer flooding.

Existing provision and capacity issues

The upgraded Sewage Treatment Works (STW) for Reading, located in the south of the Borough, was opened within the last 15 years. There is room to expand the facility if demand increases.

Impact of Future Growth

Thames Water has indicated that with regard to foul water sewerage infrastructure, there would not be any concerns with individual development sites. However, the total development identified in the sewerage catchment draining to Blakes Lock SPS within the Reading Local Plan may cause concern if all developments were to go ahead. Thames Water would therefore welcome early consultation concerning any proposed development once the scale of overall development within the catchment is known. RBC will work closely with Thames Water to provide this information in a timely manner. Failure to ensure that any required upgrades to the infrastructure network are delivered alongside development could result in adverse impacts in the form of internal and external sewer flooding and pollution of land and water courses.

It may be necessary for new or upgraded wastewater infrastructure to be provided in respect of individual developments, depending on the type, scale and location. It is crucial that any such infrastructure is provided in order to avoid unacceptable impacts on the environment. Thames Water therefore recommends that developers engage with them at the earliest opportunity (in line with paragraph 26 of the revised NPPF) to establish:

- A development's demand for sewerage and wastewater treatment and network infrastructure both on and off site and if it can be met, and
- The surface water drainage requirements and flood risk of the development both on and off-site and if it can be met.

As with water supply as mentioned above, Thames Water suggests that where they have highlighted issues of wastewater infrastructure capability that the Council state the following: "*Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate*

wastewater capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. In some circumstances, it may be necessary for developers to fund studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to an overloading of the existing wastewater infrastructure." Applicants should seek information through Thames Water's pre-planning service[27] as mentioned above.

Priorities for Meeting Need
Thames Water has confirmed that in terms of the Reading STW, relevant upgrades will be delivered during the next Asset Management Plan Period (AMP8) 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2030[28]. This will ensure that available capacity at the STW is sufficient to accommodate future growth in the catchment area. The Thames Water regulatory team liaising directly with the Environment Agency to ensure compliance. This needs to be kept under review throughout the Plan period. The capital cost of sewage connections on and off site is usually met by the developer, with an offset to take account of future income.

Electricity

Table 4: Electricity Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is responsible for delivering electricity across southern England, including Reading. The Southern Electric Power Distribution Network Development Report (SEPD NDR)[29] details planned investment in the area over the next ten years. The main purpose of the NDR is to assist existing and prospective users in making new or additional use of the existing distribution system. This is updated periodically and includes a list of high-level plans for network interventions and flexibility service requirements for the next ten years, detailing the location of the intervention, when works are forecast for delivery and requirements for flexible services or increasing existing asset capacity. More specific information related to system capacity and detailed site information is available upon request. There are also a number of tools and maps available for developers and members of the public to help customers assess available capacity and projected headroom up to 2050[30]. Additionally, significant reforms are expected to the connections regime to enable new connections as quickly as possible. This is especially important as aims for net zero will rely on electrification and therefore, increase demand.
Existing provision and capacity issues
The Borough is now facing network capacity issues and restrictions have been placed on new connections. This means that significant numbers of new developments may not be able to comply with Local Plan policies requiring heat pumps and EV charging points. Additionally, new connections that provide

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[27] More information about Thames Water's preplanning service is available at: https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers
[28] https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/our-five-year-plan
[29] The SEPD NDP can be accessed at https://www.ssen.co.uk/globalassets/our-services/network-capacity/network-development-plan-consultation-documents/sepd-network-development-report.pdf
[30] SSEN Tools and Maps: https://www.ssen.co.uk/our-services/tools-and-maps/

electricity (such as solar panels) may also be affected by these restrictions. SSEN has identified sites where there are known capacity constraints, as well as strategic capacity constraints generally as a result of increased demand associated with net zero measures. These will require detailed investigation and modelling to determine what upgrades are required to create both high voltage and extra high voltage, by development, using typical demands for different building uses. Discussions between SSEN, developers and RBC are ongoing to address these issues both strategically and on a site-by-site basis.

As the Borough works to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve net-zero by 2030, additional electricity demand will continue to increase in association with widespread electric vehicle charging and air-, ground- or water-sourced heat pumps.

Impact of Future Growth
SSEN identified that the capability of a number of networks and substations would be exceeded by potential development. Overcoming capacity constraints will require significant investment and changes to how such capacity is allocated. If the necessary investment is not secured, this will constrain our ability to deliver the level of development identified in the Local Plan and harm our local progress toward net zero.
Priorities for Meeting Need
In order to accommodate development as proposed by the Local Plan, SSEN may need to carry out major reinforcement works to their infrastructure. Depending on the specific voltage, this could require up to 4 years lead-time, with the highest voltage requiring a longer period of time for reinforcement. Depending on the nature of the works, they would either be chargeable on an appointment basis or fully rechargeable. The need for additional network capacity is being continually emphasised by Reading in its conversations with SSEN.

Gas

Table 5: Gas Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The national high pressure gas transmission system is owned and operated by National Gas Transmission, but the lower-pressure local distribution network in the Reading area is owned by SGN. The SGN Long Term Development Statement[31], published annually, provides actual and ten-year forecast of volumes of transportation system usage. The Statement also identifies planned major reinforcement projects and associated investment. As progress toward net zero progresses, it is anticipated that demand for gas will steadily decrease.
Existing provision and capacity issues
Provision on on-site gas distribution is the responsibility of the developer. Reinforcements and developments of local distribution network result for overall demand growth in a region rather than site-specific development.
Impact of Future Growth

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[31] The SGN Long Term Development Statement can be accessed at: https://www.sgn.co.uk/sites/default/files/media-entities/documents/2022-10/SGN-LTDS-2022.pdf

Proposed growth over the plan period will not cause any major issues upon the Reading low-pressure network. Based on the proposed location of housing and employment allocations it is unlikely reinforcement will be required to support the proposed load. The capacity is broadly in place. Natural gas demand is set to reduce drastically due to the forthcoming ban on natural gas heating in new homes which is set to take effect through the Future Homes Standard (FHS) in 2025. In recent years, new houses have added relatively little to gas demand because their heat demands are considerably lower due to better building standards and more efficient boiler technology. However, as the FHS is not yet legislated or should the need for reinforcement arise, gas suppliers and distributors will need to be kept aware of development phasing.

Priorities for Meeting Need

The Long Term Development Statement identifies that SGN has an obligation to develop and maintain an efficient and economical pipeline system, and to comply with any reasonable requests to connect premises. Where reinforcement is required, this is charged for according to agreed charging regime. Dependent on the scale, some reinforcement projects may have significant planning, resource and construction lead times and as much notice as possible should be given. In particular, there is typically a requirement for two to four years' notice of any project requiring the construction of high-pressure pipelines, although in certain circumstances, project lead-times may exceed this period.

Waste

Table 6: Waste Infrastructure Needs

Strategy

Waste infrastructure is that used in the collection, treatment and disposal or residential and commercial waste. The focus of waste policy is on more sustainable approaches to waste – increasing the value recovered and decreasing the amount sent to landfill.

Minerals and waste planning is a matter for a separate Minerals and Waste Development Framework. A Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP), The Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan[32], was produced by Hampshire County Council on behalf of Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and was adopted in January 2023. This document is in accordance with the Waste Management Plan for England (2021)[33] and the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)[34].

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[32] The Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan can be accessed on the Council's website at: https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/the-central-and-eastern-berkshire-minerals-and-waste-plan/

[33] The Waste Management Plan for England can be accessed at the government's website at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/955897/waste-management-plan-for-england-2021.pdf

[34] The National Planning Policy for Waste is available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-for-waste

The Government is prepared to introduce targets within the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) element of the Environment Act 2021[35] that will require the recycling of 68% of 'in scope' packaging by 2024 and 76% of 'in scope' packaging by 2030. This will apply to municipal waste and thus local authorities will be expected to contribute. The extent to which targets will apply to the RE3 partner councils remains to be quantified, as a suite of secondary legislation and statutory guidance is forthcoming.

The RE3 councils – Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell Forest Borough Council – have signed a 25-year contract (2006 – 2031) with FCC Environment.

Existing provision and capacity issues

Local Authorities and private companies provide waste services. Local Authorities cover municipal waste. Infrastructure for other waste types is largely delivered through the private sector.

Within Reading there is a Household Waste Recycling Centre and transfer station at the Smallmead Site in South Reading, and a Material Reclamation Facility. There is no landfill site in the Borough.

Impact of Future Growth

Clearly, as the numbers of people and households increase it is likely that the aggregate waste output in each area and for the RE3 area as a whole will increase. The type of development is important in the cost of waste collection – HMOs, flats and high-rise developments are likely to have a greater cost of collection and can be more problematic in terms of supporting resident participation. There is concern that high levels of permitted development to convert shops or offices to residential accommodation would result in a lack of adequate waste storage for individual and communal properties. This can represent a drag on overall waste management performance where resources (either landowner and/or local authority) are not readily available to support residents in such developments. There are clear strategic considerations for local authorities that stem directly from development plans.

Furthermore, additional housing being constructed in the area will generate construction waste and place additional demand on waste infrastructure. The Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan has identified any need for additional infrastructure throughout the plan period.

Priorities for Meeting Need

At present, there is still further capacity at the RE3 facilities in South Reading to accommodate municipal waste. This will continue to be reviewed throughout the Plan period.

Tackling the growth in waste is an essential element of RE3's strategy and a key objective is to manage the growth in costs that could have corporate impacts, impacting other services. In terms of future priorities, these are identified through the JMWP and will be reviewed in the coming years.

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[35] More information on the EPR can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/extended-producer-responsibility-for-packaging-who-is-affected-and-what-to-do

Renewable Energy

Table 7: Renewable Energy Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
Renewable energy is an integral part of Government's aims to reduce and eventually eliminate CO_2 emissions and achieve net zero by 2050. The UK's sixth Carbon Budget will cut emissions by 78% by 2035 compared with 1990 levels[36]. The Planning Act 2008 introduced statutory duties on regional and local plans to take action on Climate Change. Reading Borough Council published their most recent Climate Emergency Strategy in 2020[37]. This enshrines a commitment to the goal of a net zero carbon Reading by 2030 and sets out the action required during the five-year period. In the Strategy and in the RBC Corporate Carbon Plan[38] it is recognised that there are substantive renewable schemes and district energy schemes needed to reduce carbon emissions in the short to medium term. The most recent annual review of the progress made is available in the 2023/2024 Annual Report[39]. Reading Borough Council has commissioned extensive work to identify potential sites for district heating networks. This would enable individual buildings to utilise the resources of a wider area by tapping into an existing network.
Existing provision and capacity issues
Renewables are secured on a site-by-site basis as part of negotiations on planning applications and to meet the local planning policy requirements for Sustainable Design and Construction. Current schemes in the Borough include photovoltaic solar panels, thermal solar panels, air-source heat pumps, ground-source heat pumps and wind turbines. There is an urgent need to reduce energy demand in domestic and commercial properties via 'deep retrofit' of existing properties, as well as to provide more renewable energy from local sources. An increased demand for electricity will arise as we move away from gas. This must be met by low and zero carbon sources. An increase of approximately 10 to 15 times the current level of renewable energy generation is needed within the Borough. To date, the Council has installed over 7,500 solar panels on over 40 council, community and school buildings and on 457 houses. In 2018/2019, these schemes generated 1.6 MWh of electricity, the equivalent to powering over 400 houses with 100% of their electricity needs. The Civic Offices hosts the Council's largest solar panel system which generates an estimated 10% of the building's electricity.

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[36] Press release: UK enshrines new target in law to slash emissions by 78% by 2035: UK enshrines new target in law to slash emissions by 78% by 2035 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[37] The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020 – 2025: https://readingcan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/our-plan-READING-CLIMATE-EMERGENCY-STRATEGY-2020-25-Final.pdf

[38] RBC Corporate Carbon Plan 2020 – 2025: https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s14715/Appendix%203%20Carbon%20Plan.pdf

[39] The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020 – 2025 annual report: https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s33466/Appendix%201%20-%20Annual%20Report%202023-24%20on%20the%20Reading%20Climate%20Emergency%20Strategy%202020-25.pdf

Around 9.4% of Reading's households are estimated to be in fuel poverty[40], meaning their fuel bills exceed 10% of annual income. Opportunities to provide lower cost, clean energy to these users offers social as well as environmental benefits.

Impact of Future Growth

Alongside growth there will be the need to identify and incorporate additional renewable energy provision within the Borough to look at site specific measures in line with national policy and the Local Plan's policy requirements. This includes the potential for new decentralised energy or renewable energy sites. Because Reading is a large, developed urban area with a high energy load, it will likely need to import renewable energy and fuels from other local authority areas.

Priorities for Meeting Need

The Borough is continually examining the potential for future investment into renewable and low carbon energy generation across Reading. The public sector will take the lead in applying photovoltaic solar technology by installing solar panels onto public buildings including housing, community buildings, schools, hospitals, leisure centres, police and fire authorities. The Council is also exploring opportunities for hydroelectric power schemes along Reading's rivers.

Digital Infrastructure

Table 8: Digital Infrastructure Needs

Strategy

National policy states that planning policies and decisions should enable the expansion of advanced, high-quality and reliable electronic communications networks in order to support sustainable economic growth and social well-being[41]. This includes supporting the expansion of next generation mobile technologies (such as 5G) and full-fibre broadband connections. Customer should have access to services from a wide range of providers and full-fibre connections should be prioritised to both existing and new developments. Technological advances and changes in the way we work will increase demand on networks. To support this demand, we need digital infrastructure that is high-capacity, reliable, resilient, secure, affordable and fast. Digital infrastructure can also support a shift to Net Zero carbon emissions by reducing commuting.

Reading Borough Council is a member of the Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG)[42] which aims to accelerate digital connectivity across the region for both businesses and residents. Specific aims include:

- Increasing Berkshire's full fibre coverage to 85% by 2025,
- Eliminating connectivity 'not spots', and
- Optimising use of wireless technologies and small cell technology.

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[40] ONS, sub-regional fuel poverty data 2021: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1153252/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-tables-2023-2021-data.xlsx

[41] More detail is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 10: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

[42] More information about the Berkshire DIG is available here: https://www.berkshiredig.org.uk/

This will support local residents and ensure that Reading and Berkshire remain prime locations for investment and sustainable economic development. Reading Borough Council aims to engage with private providers on a regular basis to proactively plan for digital infrastructure throughout the plan period. Finally, RBC is taking part in the Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA) Pilot to create a spatial database of publicly owned assets for use in the rollout of wireless communication networks. This will help to enable more efficient industry access to public assets and encourage swift deployment of infrastructure.

Existing provision and capacity issues

Reading is a largely urban authority and as such, already has a good level of digital communications infrastructure. In particular, there is widespread superfast broadband coverage which is rapidly being replaced by full-fibre networks and gigabit-capable connections, largely independent of the Council's efforts. These projects are primarily managed by BT Open Reach and CityFibre to enable that all development is future-proofed to ensure 'fibre to the premises' (FTTP).

Impact of Future Growth

There will be an ongoing need to raise the level of digital infrastructure. We should expect significant increases in the amount of data being carried over networks and additional usage demands.

Priorities for Meeting Need

The Council encourages the installation of the current generation of full-fibre broadband to the premises and gigabit-cable connections for all new developments. Installation during initial construction is the most cost-effective approach. All copper infrastructure should be replaced, as copper ultimately restricts performance and capacity. Reading Borough Council is engaging with private infrastructure providers on an ongoing basis to ensure that digital infrastructure can meet Reading's needs throughout the plan period.

Air Quality

Table 9: Air Quality Infrastructure Needs

Strategy

The 2008 Ambient Air Quality Directive sets legally binding limits for concentrations of major air pollutants that affect public health such as particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). The UK also has national emission reduction commitments for overall UK emissions of five other damaging air pollutants (fine particulate matter, ammonia, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide and non-methane volatile organic compounds). Local Authorities are required to regularly review and assess local air quality. Where exceedances are likely, the Local Authority must designate an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan that outlines the measures it intends to pursue.

RBC has declared a single AQMA and implemented an associated Air Quality Action Plan (2023 – 2028)[43] (AQAP). The AQAP looks at all aspects of air quality, including domestic heating, tailpipe exhausts, and pollution from industrial

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[43] RBC Air Quality Action Plan 2023 – 2028: https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s29174/Appendix%201%20-%20Draft%20Reading%20Air%20Quality%20Action%20Plan%202024-2028.pdf

processes. It is recognised that the main source of air pollution in Reading is from combustion engines associated with transportation.

A policy regarding air quality is included in the Local Plan (EN15) and aims to ensure that increased development within the AQMA does not lead to a net increase in pollutants as well as ensuring that there is appropriate mitigation.

Existing provision and capacity issues

The AQMA includes much of the central area and the main radial transport corridors.

Air quality is measured using a combination of methods providing detailed measurements in real time of the levels of different pollutants at a variety of places across the Borough. The key locations of non-compliance (elevated concentrations of NO_2) were:

- London Road
- Castle Hill
- Caversham Road/A329
- Caversham Road (A4155)
- Kings Road
- Prospect Street
- George Street
- Oxford Road
- Station Hill and Friar Street

Despite these exceedances, air quality has improved in Reading, particularly since the Covid-19 Pandemic. It is difficult to predict if this represents a "new normal" or if recent data reflects a brief reduction in pollutants associated with a temporary change in travel behaviour.

Impact of Future Growth

The air quality impact of development varies significantly depending on where the development is, the nature of the development and the existing traffic conditions. Air Quality assessments deal with each site on an individual basis. The AQAP aims to address the cumulative effects of development.

Priorities for Meeting Need

In Reading, areas close to congested and busy roads experience the highest levels of pollution, many in excess of the air quality requirements for nitrogen dioxide. Although particulates (PM_x) are arguably more harmful to human health, Reading PM levels are below legal limits. Therefore, NO_2 is the primary focus on the Action Plan, although reducing PM is a strong secondary aim.

The AQAP prioritises ensuring that new development does not result in 'background creep' of pollution levels. Actions targeting diesel cars in particular are likely to bring the biggest reductions in NO_2 levels. Improvements are not always possible from privately owned vehicles, but considerable progress has been made to reduce emissions from buses and taxis within the Borough.

The priority is to reduce impacts or offset within the development in the first instance. However, there may be circumstances where a developer will be required to fund mitigating measures elsewhere to offset the increase in local pollutant

emissions as a consequence of the proposed development. This may be through a specific scheme or measure or a contribution to the cost of the monitoring network. The infrastructure policy in the Local Plan (CC9) identifies measures to tackle poor air quality or for ongoing air quality monitoring as one of the areas for which planning obligations could be sought. Most improvements to air quality are closely tied with improvements to transport, for example, reducing private care use and increasing active travel like walking and cycling.

Specific projects identified within the Schedule in Section 6 are:

- Measures to reduce vehicles speeds and associated emissions;
- Emissions-based parking or permit charges;
- Electrification of Reading Buses;
- Congestion management measures;
- EV charging stations;
- Strategic highway improvements to prioritise road space away from cars;
- Park and ride ('mobility hub') expansions;
- New pedestrian and cycle routes; and
- Equipment to monitor air quality at strategic locations (in particular, increased monitoring of $PM_{2.5}$).

Green Infrastructure

Open Space

Table 10: Open Space Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The overarching strategy on open spaces within Reading was published in 2007[44] and followed by a 2018 update note[45]. Overall, the Borough continues to be well served by open space, but total open space provided is marginally less than what is recommended by guidelines. Additionally, the distribution of open space is uneven across the Borough.   Specific policies in the Local Plan aim to ensure access to open space. EN7 identifies key areas of Local Green Space and Public Open Space. EN8 contains a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space. EN9 requires provision of open space as a result of new development. EN10 ensures that new development improves links to existing open space, where possible. OU1 discourages development of sports fields and playing pitches.
Existing provision and capacity issues
There are a range of different types of open spaces within the Borough, managed by the Council. Local Green Space (LGS) and Public Open Space (POS) are suitable for general recreational use and usually include parks, gardens and recreation grounds.

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[44] Reading Open Spaces Strategy 2007: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/Reading_Open_Spaces_Strategy.pdf
[45] 2018 Open Spaces Strategy Update Note: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2022/03/CD7.11-Reading-Borough-Council-Open-Space-Update-Note-2018.pdf

Key areas of deficiency identified in the Open Spaces Strategy and Update Note are as follows:

- In central Reading, Public Open Space is, by and large, where residents are not;
- In north Reading, large areas are lacking children's play facilities;
- Area immediately to the west, north-west, south and east of the town centre are amongst the most poorly supplied in the Borough in terms of recreational open space; the problem is exacerbated by very dense housing;
- Severance lines, such as railways and the IDR, further reduce residents' access to open space.

Additionally, play areas and equipment are used to capacity and continuous investment is needed simply to sustain existing provision. In recent years, significant investments have been made in play equipment locations throughout the Borough, such as Prospect Park.

Impact of Future Growth

Additional future growth will exacerbate these issues, particularly by increasing pressure on the current open space infrastructure. It is important that there is a managed programme of targeted open space growth and enhancement in existing areas in order to support sustainable growth.

Priorities for Meeting Need

There are a number of key projects identified in Council policy documents which will support continued growth and these are listed in the Schedule in Section 6:

- Improving the quality of existing open spaces, particularly larger parks;
- Updating play areas and equipment to ensure capacity, as well as health and safety;
- Creating and improving links from residential development to adjacent open spaces;
- A masterplan for Christchurch Meadow to develop the area as a high-quality destination park; and
- Improving existing allotment space.

Biodiversity

Table 11: Biodiversity Infrastructure Needs

Strategy

The NPPF sets out the key planning principles for biodiversity conservation and enhancement. It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services, minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient. Councils should employ the concepts of natural capital, green infrastructure, and multifunctional green space.

Local Planning Authorities now have a legal duty through the Environment Act 2021[46] to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Act requires that development projects need to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). This is required for all sites. Local Authorities will also be required to regularly report on biodiversity net gain and consider how existing planning advice and strategies can protect and enhance biodiversity. Local Nature Recovery Strategies will agree local priorities, map the most valuable existing areas for nature and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat. These requirements are in line with the Government's aims to halt the decline in species abundance and protect 30% of UK land by 2030. Reading Borough Council is working with neighbouring authorities to publish a LNRS for Berkshire in 2025[47].

The Reading Biodiversity Action Plan[48] (March 2021) sets the aims, objectives and actions that the Council and its partners will undertake to conserve and enhance Reading's biodiversity.

The need for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is set out in the Local Plan in EN12 which identifies and protects area of existing biodiversity value and seeks to join them together in a Green Network. Local Plan policies define the Green Network as Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Areas of Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats, open space, green links and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

Trees are also important in maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and the requirement for new development to make provision for tree planting is addressed by Local Plan policy EN14. The Council has adopted a Tree Strategy[49] (March 2021) which seeks to significantly increase the amount of tree coverage in the Borough and identified the areas which are a priority for tree planting.

Existing provision and capacity issues

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife and represent local character and distinctiveness. They have an important role to play in meeting local and national targets for biodiversity conservation. These are of particular importance in an urban borough like Reading. In Reading, there are 25 LWS with 19 owned or managed by RBC. LWS are regularly reviewed by the Berkshire Local Wildlife Site Partnership.

Impact of Future Growth

There is a need to proactively protect and enhance biodiversity. New development will need to demonstrate that there will be a net gain for biodiversity using the DEFRA metric. This will also help to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Priorities for Meeting Need

It is important that there are mechanisms in place to protect, conserve, enhance and extend habitats across the Borough in line with Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Nature Recovery Strategies. In particular, that existing areas are enhanced in

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[46] The Environment Act 2021 can be accessed here: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted
[47] Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy: https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/berkshire-local-nature-recovery-strategy
[48] Reading Biodiversity Action Plan: https://images.reading.gov.uk/2021/03/Reading-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2021.pdf
[49] Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy: https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/trees-hedges-and-environment/trees/

terms of their biodiversity value, that all new development achieves at least 10% BNG, that sustainable urban drainage systems maximise ecological value, and that the Borough's residents have access to well-managed sites.

There is also need to identify new, and enhance existing, LWS and ecological links and stepping stones to ensure that wildlife can move throughout the Borough. Contributions may need to be collected in order to ensure that increased recreational pressure on a site is managed and does not adversely impact upon wildlife. Wherever possible, tree cover will be increased. Schemes should promote the use of native species and pursue the eradication of invasive species, as this can be a serious barrier to nature recovery.

A new RBC Natural Environment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the Berkshire Nature Recovery Strategy will be published in 2025. There will be ongoing work to identify opportunities and secure implementation throughout the plan period and reviews of this work will be fed into future iterations of this IDP.

Social and Community Infrastructure

Education – Primary and Secondary

Table 12: Primary and Secondary Education Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The Local Plan aims to improve the quality of life of those living in the Borough through education. Brighter Futures for Children (BFFC) on behalf of Reading Council has statutory duties to ensure sufficient school places for Reading children and to promote high standards for wellbeing, safety and achievement. The quality of education provision in Reading is high, with the vast majority of Reading schools judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding. The BFFC School Places Planning Strategy sets the following expectations: • All Reading schools to be good or outstanding; • RBC, BFFC and local schools work together to meet the challenge of providing sufficient school places; • All schools operate in good quality, safe premises; • Children are educated close to home; • Schools work with and are connected to the local communities they serve; • The Council and schools work in partnership to effectively meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); and • The Council, schools and BFFC make efficient use of resources.
Existing provision and capacity issues
Primary – Projections indicate that demand for reception places will remain at current rates for at least the next five years. This will result in a surplus of places across the Borough and sufficient capacity to meet any increase in demand. While rates are expected to hold Borough-wide, some areas of the Borough will see reduced demand for primary pupil places. These areas will be kept under review to ensure that provision is sustainable and schools may see reduced admissions numbers or the repurposing of accommodation. Secondary – Demand for Year 7 places is steadily increasing, but at a slower rate than previously anticipated. Overall growth is estimated at around 6% in the next 7

years. These forecasts currently indicate that there are sufficient secondary school places to meet demand to 2029/30 in all year groups. The opening of River Academy in 2024 will provide a new 8-form entry secondary school.

SEND – Demand for places to meet the needs of pupils with SEND is rising due to increased diagnosis and the extension of the age range to 25. These individuals have specific needs due to Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Autism Spectrum Conditions and Severe Learning Disabilities. At present, Reading is unable to meet the following areas of need:

- Assessment places for children arriving in Reading with high needs but previously unknown to services (including those from abroad);
- Community special school placements;
- Placements for children displaying anxiety and emotionally based school avoidance;
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health provision for secondary-age girls; and
- Children with failed placements in specialist provision displaying a significant level of dysregulation.

There are insufficient local places for Reading children with SEND of primary and secondary age, as well as ages 16-25. Oak Tree Special School (sponsored by the Maiden Erleigh Trust opened in 2023, providing 75 places for Reading children ages 5-18.

Impact of Future Growth

Pupil place planning has implications for infrastructure provision as each new dwelling within the Borough is expected to yield a need for 0.3 primary school places and 0.16 secondary school places. Overall, there is sufficient surplus capacity to account for growth within the Borough for both primary and secondary places but needs for SEND provision will increase significantly. Forecasts are a good indicator of future need, but still represent a valuable tool rather than a definitive position. As such, needs will be kept under review throughout the plan period.

Priorities for Meeting Need

In order to meet the growing demand for SEND places and reduce dependence on out-of-Borough independent special schools, Reading is planning to commission additional primary and secondary special places to cater for pupils through special school expansions and new Additionally Resourced Provision. There is also a need for provision of post-16 SEND provision for people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties.

In general, provision of education infrastructure should fit neatly into the existing urban environment of Reading. Due to the lack of undeveloped land within the Borough, the Council will seek to creatively deliver school provision as part of existing developments, multistorey buildings or in existing buildings that have been retrofitted[50]. New education provision should provide flexible spaces that are able to cope with changing needs. There will be ongoing work to identify needs and to secure creation of places (particularly SEND places) throughout the plan period. Further detail will feed into future reviews of this IDP.

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[50] Good examples of successful delivery of school provision in an urban environment can be found in the South Kilburn Redevelopment Masterplan and the Swiss Cottage Special School, Camden.

Education – Post-16 Further Education

Table 13: Post-16 Further Education Needs

Strategy
Following "Raising the Participation Age" legislation in 2013, 16–17-year-olds are now required to be in education or training. In particular, Government has sought to reduce the number of young people who are NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Young people aged 14-19 are entitled to access foundation learning[51] and apprenticeships.
Existing provision and capacity issues
Provision of post-16 education and training in Reading is currently delivered by a range of providers including Reading College, schools' sixth forms and private training providers. The Education Bill has provided for the establishment of a much wider range of education establishments. Maintained schools have been encouraged to become Academies. Communities are able to set up free schools, which may include 14-19 studio schools for young people at risk of disengagement and universities are able to sponsor University Technical Colleges for 14–19-year-olds.
Currently in Reading (2023) the published data is 2.8% NEET and 0.4% not known. This represents a slight increase of 0.6% since 2022. These statistics are published annually by the Department for Education.
Reading Borough serves the wider Reading catchment with Reading as a net importer of new provision. This is predominately because of Reading College's presence within the Borough. Indeed, of the 16–18-year-old learners who access provision in Reading, only a quarter are estimated to be Reading residents.
Impact of Future Growth
Reading is likely to continue to be a net importer of new provision, especially given the relative lack of post-16 education opportunities in surrounding authorities. Although there is sufficient capacity in the local further education sector to meet demand, the physical space needs to be appropriate for delivery i.e. 'fit for purpose.' At this time, there are no specific needs to address the impact of future growth.
Priorities for Meeting Need
There is unlikely to be a specific requirement for additional infrastructure, but providers will need to ensure that existing accommodation is fit for purpose. There will be additional demands on training providers in terms of apprenticeships, which may be met through work placements, etc. There will be ongoing work among partners to provide high-quality education and training that meets local needs and this will be kept under review throughout the plan period.

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[51] Foundation Learning is the provision for all young people working at low levels of attainment, i.e. below the level of higher GCSE grades. This includes all young people with learning difficulties and therefore includes young people who have profound or multiple learning difficulties. Foundation learning comprises three components: Vocational Learning, Functional Skills in English, Maths and IT; and Personal Social Development.

Early Years – Children's Centres and Nurseries

Table 14: Early Years Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The Childcare Act (2016) requires all local authorities to ensure sufficient childcare which is high-quality, flexible, inclusive and accessible to all children. This includes children who are eligible for funded early years entitlements and paid places for children of parents who work, train or volunteer. Detailed guidance for Local Authorities is provided in "Early Education and Childcare: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities"[52].   The role of the local authority is to manage the market to ensure sustainability, capacity and flexibility. High-quality early education is important for all children and especially those who are disadvantaged. It also enables parents to enter work in order to increase household income.   The Reading Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023 - 2024[53] concluded that there are currently sufficient childcare places for under-fives and this includes funded early education and paid spaces, albeit not always the preferred setting or sessions.   Currently, eligible targeted 2-year-olds and all 3- and 4-year-olds can access 15 hours funded childcare term time. In addition, many working families are eligible to claim an additional 15 hours (up to 30 hours total) for 3- and 4-year-olds funded during term time. In April 2024 the working entitlement was expanded to include eligible 2-year-olds and from September 2024 children from 9 months. The expanded entitlements have been rolled out in stages, 15 hours initially term-time, extending to 30 hours from September 2025 when many working parents of children aged 9 months to school age will be able to access funded childcare. Demand for childcare is increasing following the expansion of early years entitlement.
Existing provision and capacity issues
The Office of National Statistics reports a long-term trend of decreasing live births. Reading has seen a 22.2% decrease in live births when comparing 2018-19 and 2021-22 data.   There were 4 pre-school closures in 2023-24 and the opening of 3 Day Nurseries and 7 early years childminding settings with supply remaining stable and a significant interest to expand on existing sites.   Childcare capacity, in particular for pre-school children, fluctuates throughout the year. Places come under increasing pressure in the summer term ahead of school intake to Reception in September. Additionally, the number of places provided can be impacted with little notice due to staffing pressures. This results in a challenging environment in which to predict sufficiency on an annualised basis.   Reading has a good balance of childcare by type in each ward. There are no early years providers which open before 7:00 a.m. Most providers open between 8:00

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[52]Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities is available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2/early-education-and-childcare-applies-from-1-april-2024

[53] The Reading Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023 – 2024 is available at the Council's website at: https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/BFfC-Childcare-Sufficiency-Assessment-23-24.pdf

and 9:00 a.m. Childminders appear to offer earlier start times overall. Most early years providers close at 6:00 p.m.
Impact of Future Growth
Planned development will increase the stock of housing, particularly in the town centre. This will increase the demand for childcare in these areas. The expanded eligibility to the working entitlement has increased demand for places for children 9 months to 2 years. From September 2025 the entitlement extends from 15 hours to 30 hours term time, when demand is expected to increase further. The majority of early years childcare settings hold a waiting list and supply and demand is being carefully monitored.
Priorities for Meeting Need
The strategic approach to childcare sufficiency is focussed on an extensive workforce development and communication strategy, as well as capital funding modification of existing settings to allow for increased capacity.

Community Facilities

Table 15: Community Facilities

Strategy
The Community Partnership Team identifies the vision and targets regarding community services in the area of operations it supports – Hexham Road, Whitley Wood, Coley Park, Norcot and Southcote. Specific capital infrastructure projects are not identified at this time. The strategy aims to join up services and target resources to more effectively meet the needs of those in some of Reading's most deprived localities. The Sustainable Communities Team's focus will be to provide vibrant community hubs at the heart of our housing estates, with services and activities which are shaped by local residents and delivered from each centre.
Existing provision and capacity issues
There are a number of community centres across the Borough which are used for a range of activities. Most community centres have space capacity, but inflexible space restricts the level and type of activities supported. Many buildings are aging, in need of refurbishment or need accessibility improvements. An Asset Strategy is underway to review the use and financial sufficiency of all buildings. The deterioration of buildings internal and external features affects the quality of users' experiences and capital investment should be made to improve the offer. Improvements aim to build an extensive local service offer that can improve outcomes for residents (primarily tenants) but also enhance the quality of life for those living around the centres.
Impact of Future Growth
The projected adult population increase will increase demand for a range of community services and therefore demand on centres. Significant public sector cuts have meant that voluntary sector organisations provide more services and as a result, require space to deliver this work.
Priorities for Meeting Need

New community centres should involve co-location of services, much like at existing centres such as the South Reading Hub. Future funding opportunities need to be sought for neighbourhood area improvements, which would include works to key community centres. The Council aims to work closely with existing community groups and Housing Associations to provide multipurpose facilities during regeneration. Ongoing efforts include work in Southcote, Whitley Wood Community Centre, Hexham Road Community Centre, Amersham Road and Dee Park. At this time, no specific projects are identified within the schedule, but this will be kept under review throughout the plan period.

Healthcare

Table 16: Healthcare Infrastructure

Strategy
The Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) was established in July 2022 and replaced the three clinical commissioning groups. The BOB ICB works to decide which health services should be provided, where they should be located, who will provide them and how they should be paid for. The BOB ICB oversees six Primary Care Estates within Reading which contain 16 general practice surgeries in total, as well as the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Delivery plans and strategies can be viewed on the BOB ICB website[54].
The funding that ICBs receive from the Department of Health, based on the relative health and deprivation of the population, is used to pay for all NHS healthcare for the population. This ranges from public health services aimed at preventing illness, GP and other primary care services, through to highly specialised treatment for individual patients at regional and national centres.
Nationally, there is a move to reconfigure health services into fewer, larger and more fit for purpose facilities to provide a wider range of services. Larger surgeries can often offer a wider range of co-located primary services which provide better choice and access for patients.
Existing provision and capacity issues
The BOB ICB undertakes detailed demographic work using planning information to project population growth. Recent work has been undertaken to assess the future list size of all surgeries within Reading. Further work is being done to understand the current capacity of GP surgeries and to create a Statement of Need. This will determine infrastructure requirements.
Throughout Reading, the BOB ICB has identified that most surgeries are operating close to or at full capacity, and some have increased surgery hours to help meet demand. Many surgeries are operating in older, converted premises that are no longer fit for purpose and would benefit from relocation to more suitable facilities.
The BOB ICB is also developing detailed criteria for developing primary care premises and has stated a preference for new premises that are fully fitted out for clinical use.

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[54] The BOB ICB Integrated Care Strategy and Joint Forward Plan can be accessed here: https://www.bucksoxonberksw.icb.nhs.uk/integrated-care-strategy-joint-forward-plan/

In terms of hospital and specialist provision, the existing facilities at the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) are not suitable to meet the changes to demand. The RBH is on the Government's New Hospital Programme due to the significant infrastructure issues identified at its current site. For example, the A&E department is too small and is not located near to other dependent clinical services such as Intensive Care, Coronary Care or diagnostics. Maternity floorspace is also not suitable to provide a modern service. The aging estate places a significant strain on hospital maintenance and large parts of the site do not currently meet standards for future space requirements to deliver state-of-the-art healthcare.

Impact of Future Growth

Based on estimated population yields of potential and proposed housing sites, many of the 16 practices within Reading lack the capacity to accommodate growth in the next 15 years within their current premises. There are limitations on the physical expansion of several surgery premises, as some are located in converted houses and others have no additional land surrounding on which to expand. A significant increase in patient numbers is expected throughout the Borough, particularly in Central and South Reading.

In terms of hospital and specialist provision, a future delivery model will likely see more diagnostic and outpatient services located outside of the Royal Berkshire Hospital at a number of dispersed hubs which offer admin space, outpatient clinical services and diagnostic services. The total number of hospital beds is not projected to increase despite population growth. This is due to changes in the way care is delivered, with hospital stays becoming shorter and some types of care being delivered at other sites or at home supported by virtual technology. Total bedspace projections will continue to be assessed, but needs generally reflect age demographics, rather than total population growth as the main users of hospital services are older adults and infants.

Despite there being no projected increase in the number of bedspaces needed at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, a significant increase in floorspace will be required to provide a modern hospital service with the same number of bedspaces.

Priorities for Meeting Need

Because most GP surgeries are operating at capacity, it is anticipated that existing surgeries will require an increase in clinical space onsite or relocation to a larger facility. Surgeries which are located in buildings no longer fit for purpose will also require relocation. The BOB ICB has a strategic preference to relocate services to locations that establish larger site provision, rather than disparate services across a number of smaller sites.

Relevant costs and funding sources will be determined at such time additional capacity is required and specific plans stated (e.g. extensions, conversion of administrative space to clinical space, creation of new sites, etc.) and will be estimated in terms of developer contribution.

Within Central Reading, it is preferred that large, fitted out facilities are provided on the ground floor(s) of new build flatted developments for relocation of existing surgeries within the town centre. Throughout the Borough, there may be opportunity for surgeries to be located on smaller housing developments managed by the Council.

> The Royal Berkshire Hospital (either at its current location or on a new site should the hospital be relocated) will require an increase in floorspace to provide a modern service. This should be accompanied by investment in digital connectivity to enable a 'smart hospital' and modern construction methods to build to a net-zero standard.
>
> There will be ongoing discussion regarding specific requirements between the Council, the BOB ICB and the RBH and this will be incorporated in the updates of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Schedule.

Police

Table 17: Police Infrastructure

Strategy
On of the key themes of the RBC Council Plan (2025 – 2028)[55] is safeguarding and supporting the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children. Reading's Community Safety Partnership, who work to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, have produced a Community Safety and Serious Violence Strategy (2023 – 2026)[56]. This partnership compromises statutory agencies, including Reading Borough Council, Thames Valley Police, The Probation Service (South Central), Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Buckingham, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS), Brighter Futures for Children and representatives from Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, along with a range of partners from Reading's thriving voluntary and community sector. This sets out strategy, targets and aims until 2023 and focuses on dealing with issues at a neighbourhood level, as all major partners are moving toward a more locality-based model of working.   The Thames Valley Policy (TVP) Police and Criminal Justice Plan (2021 – 2025)[57] identifies a number of strategic policing objectives, namely: • Strong local policing,   • Fighting serious organised crime,   • Fighting cybercrime and fraud,   • Improving the criminal justice system, and   • Tackling illegal encampments.   Specific actions are set within the context of funding cuts and the need to deliver services with limited resources available. TVP aims to make communities safer, increase public confidence, reduce costs by improving efficiency, improve service delivery and improve outcomes for victims of crime, as well as to aid in the prevention and investigation of crime with the use of ANPR cameras.
Existing provision and capacity issues

[55] RBC Council Plan (2025 – 2028): https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s35099/Reading%20Council%20Plan%202025-28%20FINAL.pdf

[56] Community Safety and Serious Violence Strategy (2023 – 2026): https://www.reading.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/council-strategies-plans-and-policies/corporate-plan/council-corporate-plan-2022-to-2025/#Healthy-environment

[57] TVP Police and Criminal Justice Plan (2021 – 2025): https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-criminal-justice-plan/#:~:text=Under%20the%20Police%20Reform%20and%20Social%20Responsibility%20Act,Thames%20Valley%20of%20its%20national%20or%20international%20functions

Neighbourhood policing is apportioned to meet different levels of need, which is dictated by the population in each local area. The current coverage is in line with operational requirements.

Impact of Future Growth

The most visible form of police infrastructure at the local level is the neighbourhood police office, but there are other support and associated functions that will be affected by planning related growth, and that will require expanded or new facilities to offset that impact.

The projected rises in the South Reading and Central Reading populations as a whole will lead to increased demand for police services. In particular, the TVP guidance states that large scale developments will require new and enhanced police facilities arising from growth. For smaller urban area allocations, the expansion of existing communities through incremental growth will impact on police resources, potentially significantly changing their character and community safety resource requirements.

The TVP Police and Criminal Justice Plan states that the PCCC for Thames Valley "will work with the Government, especially the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, to secure the best level of funding possible for Thames Valley and consider the level of council tax precept in light of local spending pressures, and the impact on households," whilst also recognising the need to make best use of TVPs existing resources, pursuing efficiency and effectiveness reviews in order to ensure funding is focused on delivering frontline services that protect the public.

TVP have informed the public and the Council that they are constrained in their capital spending and this affects their ability to respond adequately to the requirements of growth at all levels of service provision, in providing for new buildings and adaptations of existing buildings, and other non-property infrastructure such as new vehicles, bicycles and equipment.

Priorities for Meeting Need

In terms of specific infrastructure requirements within the Borough, TVP has identified the following (these are also included in the schedule in Section 6):

South

- A new policy facility to replace the current Reading Police Station. There is an ongoing project to establish a new facility within South Reading. This would replace the current Reading Police Station and relocate the majority of staff and departments to the new facility, aside from local teams serving the town centre itself.

Central and West

- A local town centre facility to retain TVP's presence in Reading Town Centre, including locating the existing town centre teams here.
- A number of smaller, one to two room touchdown facilities, linked to new growth where appropriate. Typically, these could be provided as part of or within existing or new community facilities.

Borough-wide

- Contributions toward the roll out of new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Cameras within Reading, particularly located around

> the strategic road network and in locations with increased activity linked to new development and growth.
>
> - Contributions towards infrastructure to increase opportunities for 'digital policing,' thus increasing the visibility, mobility and effectiveness of TVP to police local neighbourhoods.
>
> Indicative costs for such facilities will be provided by TVP and fed into future reviews.

Fire and Rescue

Table 18: Fire and Rescue Infrastructure

Strategy
Services are delivered by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) on behalf of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA). They have produced a Five Year Community Risk Management Plan 2023 - 27[58] which includes key projects for the period. RBFRS's primary role is to deliver effective prevention, protection and emergency response services to reduce community risk. The community risk management plan outlines how the Service identify and assess risks and provides high level plans to manage those risks.
Existing provision and capacity issues
RBFRS has four fire stations that serve the Borough, namely Caversham Road, Wokingham Road, Whitley Wood and Theale. These provide four emergency fire engines crewed 24/7 by full-time staff. The Whitley Wood station also serves as a training facility. Currently, RBFRS has a response standard arrival within 10 minutes of a call for 75% of all emergency incidents.
Impact of Future Growth
The location of existing fire stations is considered adequate with regard to travel times. However, additional development is viewed as likely to increase incident types, including the two highest risks to the public: road traffic collisions and dwelling fires.
Priorities for Meeting Need
It is likely that proposed developments and growth will have an impact on the demand for the Fire Service and may necessitate the provision of additional resources, but the RBFRS has not identified additional capital infrastructure requirements at this time.   Designing safety into the built environment, including fire prevention, reduces risk and therefore demand on the Fire and Rescue Service. Some of these measures are included in the building regulations but RBFRS also recommends the inclusion of domestic and commercial sprinklers. This would limit the need to alter existing fire service provision in new housing areas, thus reducing associated costs for proposed provision. This would also reduce casualties, reduce damage and protect the environment. RBFRS welcome the opportunity to work with the Council and developers and to fully discuss the benefits of such systems.

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[58] RBFRS Community Risk Management Plan can be found here: https://www.rbfrs.co.uk/app/uploads/2023/05/Corporate-Plan-and-Community-Risk-Management-Plan-2023-2027.pdf

Information from local authorities about future growth patterns to 2041, along with any existing demand pressures, are feeding into this long-term planning, including consideration of where the most effective locations for fire stations are within the area. This will be kept under review during the plan period.

Housing – Adult Social Care Accommodation

Table 19: Adult Social Care Accommodation Infrastructure

Strategy
The Council's Adult and Social Care Strategy (2019)[59] sets out the Council's vision for strategic commissioning of Adult Social Care services for adults with mental health needs, physical or learning disabilities and sensory or autism needs. This reflects the national commitment to increase the supply of housing including affordable housing and to improve the condition of existing housing. The Council has been successful in reducing the number of people going into care homes before they need to by ensuring individuals can receive a high level of care in their own homes. There are specific detailed policies in the Local Plan on affordable housing and accommodation for vulnerable people. The affordable housing policy requires provision on all sites with specific priority for family-sized housing, specialist accommodation for vulnerable people and extra-care housing.
Existing provision and capacity issues
There is no longer a need for additional extra care accommodation. There are 14 existing care homes which are meeting current needs but may not meet future needs as some of the buildings will become no longer fit-for-purpose. There is a particular need for small, bespoke units for hospital long-stayers and patients who are in and out of hospital for long periods of time. Additionally, there is a need for more ground-floor accommodation that is suitable for wheelchair users.
Impact of Future Growth
The increase in the number of residents 65+ in the coming years will carry significant implications for provision. The number of people in this age group is predicted to increase by around 33.5% by 2035, while the total adult population is only projected to rise by 4.49%. Based on these projections, we can anticipate a total of around 125 additional accommodation-based placements between 2020 and 2035. The following additional placements will be required in order to meet the predicted demand for each accommodation type by 2035. Please note that these are based on current trends and do not consider the impact of other work that may mitigate these needs in the future. These figures exclude data around any additional capacity that may exist through voids and as such, the actual requirements may be lower.   - Residential – The number of placements will increase by 37, from 225 to 262.   - Nursing – The number of placements will increase by 45, from 149 to 194.

- Supported Living – The number of accommodation-based placements will increase by 9, from 191 to 200.
- Extra Care – The number of placements will increase by 29, from 114 to 143.
- Respite – The number of placements will increase by 1, from 21 to 22.
- Shared Lives – The number of placements will increase by 1, from 18 – 19.

Priorities for Meeting Need

Currently, the Council is working to relocate some existing accommodation to sites at Battle Street, Hexham Road and Amethyst Lane. Most schemes have secured funding through S106, HCA and NGP but may require some element of local authority subsidy. Work is ongoing to identify suitable new sites on available land, including looking at RBC land holdings. New, purpose-built facilities are preferred over remodelling existing residential care that is not fit-for-purpose unless there are strong reasons to consider the latter. The Council will continue to pursue bringing schemes forward throughout the plan period.

Economic Development

Table 20: Economic Development Infrastructure

Strategy

The current Reading Strategy "Powered by People" is a recovery and renewal document created in response to the anticipated economic shocks of Covid in 2020. This is now being revised and expanded as a fresh strategic approach to the rapidly changing economic landscape post-Covid, post-Brexit and in the midst of the cost-of-living crisis. The new strategy will work closely with and rapidly bring forward the Reading 2050 Vision that underpins the Local Plan. As with previous strategies this is being produced by Reading UK CIC (REDA) in collaboration with Reading Borough Council, with an eye on the emerging priorities across Berkshire and all local authorities' economic plans. It will focus on town centre regeneration (aligned with the emerging town centre strategy and the BID renewal for 2024-29), as well as new opportunities through inward investment and tourism.

There will be a focus on creating new local jobs in screen production, carbon neutral and renewables, bio pharma skills and local "levelling up" agendas. This includes a particular focus on skills gaps and the need for retraining and retention of the existing workforce, supporting opportunity for all and tackling inequality. With potential for up to 20,000 new jobs and skills in the low carbon and renewables sector, the strategy will seek to realise these jobs, provide career opportunities for all ages, attract companies in 'green sectors' and reskill and upskill the workforce by supporting new training to come forward within the further education and higher education sectors. Working with key partners we will also seek to encourage local businesses to embrace green working practices and empower their staff through carbon literacy training.

Office and retail occupancy, especially hybrid working, is changing the face of Reading and how work-life balances are achieved. Therefore, quality of life, sustainable transport provision of Grade One office space and leisure facilities are all key themes.

To support this work REDA has commissioned baseline research on inward investment and sectoral demand, local procurement and supply chain issues, low

carbon and renewables skills and screen production skills (with the impetus of Shinfield Studios). The inward investment and commercial property research establishes:

- Challenges of perception and brand on the attractiveness of Reading and the importance of it retaining its position as regional hub and UK leading economy, against growing competition; and
- The continued key USP of Reading's location in both attracting and retaining companies. It is important to maintain and enhance transport links developing sustainable solutions.

The Local Plan and Local Transport Plan continue to play a key role in the regeneration and growth of the town. The Local Plan aims to identify and guide the use of available sites by establishing a balance between land for housing (including affordable), industry, commerce and mixed-use town centre locations. Our vision is for a vibrant Reading, one that is attractive to global business, but ultimately grows opportunities for local people and promotes the sharing of benefits across all communities.

Existing provision and capacity issues

At the heart of the Thames Valley sub-regional economy, the Reading area is home to some of the largest global corporations, especially information technology companies, as well as life science, biotechnology and environmental technology. Companies such as PepsiCo, Microsoft, Bayer, P&G and Verizon are based here but in order to continue this success, Reading must ensure the proper infrastructure and housing is in place to enable further growth.

Reading is one of the UKs strongest economies with the 6th highest average GVA (Gross Value Added) per worker[60] (£49.60 per hour while UK average is £38.90); 4th highest business stock per 10K of population; 8th highest private sector jobs and above average wages and skills levels. Structural challenges present risk. Reading has the 5th highest population growth (13.3%) between 2011-21 and house prices and private rents are at record highs. Commercial property costs are still affordable compared to many parts of the South-east, but there is lack of provision for specialist R&D spaces, particularly in the centre.

Detailed work on reviewing employment land in the Borough is forthcoming. This will assess the need for any additional employment floorspace and identify which sites should be retained in employment use and which, if any, could be developed for alternative uses. Generally, the results of the quantitative needs assessment are expected to reflect the need to protect current employment uses and to ensure a mix of size and type of units to 2041. These quantitative, as well as qualitative, issues are addressed through local plan policies.

Existing challenges include:

- 15.8% of residents have no qualifications;
- Life expectancy in deprived areas is significantly lower than in less deprived areas;
- 10.3% of households in fuel poverty;

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[60] GVA is a measure of the value of the goods and services produced in the national economy. It is primarily used to monitor the performance of the national economy and is now the measure preferred by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to measure the overall economic well-being of an area. (Source: ONS/Centre for Cities).

- 17% of children living in poverty;
- Road congestion; and
- Lack of affordable housing and rising house prices and rents.

Impact of Future Growth

Growth will continue to place demands on the existing infrastructure and one of the key issues is the need to protect a range of employment sites, which are suitable for both major employers, and small and medium sized enterprises. In particular, retaining sites for small business is important. Although the market is reacting quickly to the provision of shared/managed office space providing start up or satellite space, the "next step" office accommodation must be available for growing companies requiring larger space and more facilities. Small business should be encouraged to remain within the Borough, sustaining local supply chains and circular economies, rather than be forced to locate elsewhere because of a lack of suitable and available sites. It is equally important to retain employment sites which meet the needs of business that provide job opportunities for local people with low or no qualifications, or those from disadvantaged communities. The loss of suitable sites may further restrict the opportunity for such groups to participate in the local economy. This especially supports meeting the objective of tackling inequality and the ambitions of Reading 2050 for Smart Growth – an environment where local people can access employment, at all levels, and where new businesses can start up and flourish. Another key issue is the need to strengthen regional connectivity and public transport links through major transport and infrastructure proposals in order to increase our capacity for economic growth.

Protection of core employment areas within the Local Plan will ensure that a range of different employment land is available and maintained to support a range of employment types. Major transport projects necessary to facilitate growth are described in the Transport Section of this document.

Priorities for Meeting Need

It is clear that to support economic growth and a sustainable future the following needs to be addressed:
- Skill shortages and the need for retraining or upskilling for every resident;
- Sustainable and flexible transport options to reduce private car use, induce a shift to more sustainable modes and connect the centre with its national transport links with edge of town business parks;
- Lack of affordable, quality and secure housing provision with space for relocating families.

Leisure - Sports

Table 21: Leisure Infrastructure

Strategy

The Council envisions a leisure provision that is accessible, affordable for residents and sustainable in revenue terms to support investment into the future. Provision will include a wide variety of facilities to cater for local communities with a significant degree of public and private partners. Recently, additional facilities have been provided at Palmer Park and Rivermead with significant facility refurbishment at South Reading and Meadway. Changes at Palmer Park include provision of a 25m

6-lane community pool, which opened in winter 2022. At Rivermead, a newly built modern leisure centre fully opened in July 2024.

The open spaces strategy identifies the need to improve the quality of open space to meet growing demands placed upon it by growing population. This is for children's play provision through to places of physical activity and relaxation for all age groups.

The council's playing pitch strategy (2019-2036), among other things, identifies a need for more artificial turf pitches to meet current and anticipated future demand.

A forthcoming Commercial Development Needs Assessment will assess the need for other entertainment uses such as bowling, ice skating and additional cinema provision.

Existing provision and capacity issues

Reading's leisure services are operated by Greenwich Leisure Ltd on the Council's behalf at South Reading Leisure Centre, Meadway Leisure Centre, Palmer Park Leisure Centre and Rivermead Leisure Centre. These meet the current demand for indoor sport and physical activity, but population growth will create unmet demand.

Outdoor sports facilities including both informal and formal are operated directly by the Council and need improvement to increase capacity and meet demand. There is an under provision of artificial turf pitches.

In addition to the public provision there are also a number of facilities provided through the private sector.

Impact of Future Growth

Major developments, especially in the south and centre of the Borough are likely to place further demand on such facilities. In terms of public provision, it is inevitable that activities for which there is highest demand will be more likely to be provided as they can be justified in terms of meeting the needs of local people and be financially viable. Sport England modelling is used to calculate the increased demand for sporting facilities that is generated by development.

Priorities for Meeting Need

In terms of public provision, there will continue to be a review of trends in the leisure fitness market and consideration of the need to provide access to a wide range of sporting activities locally. Reading indoor sports facilities, largely updated to 2024, are designed to meet existing demand.

Provision of extra artificial turf pitches or increasing the capacity of existing pitches is required across the Borough, along with improvements to grass sports and pavilions.

For the town centre, increasing the capacity of the Thames parks, particularly Christchurch Meadows, is required to meet changing demand for sport, play and general recreation.

Culture and Tourism

Table 22: Culture and Tourism Infrastructure

Strategy

Reading's Culture and Heritage Strategy 2015-2030 states, "By 2030, Reading will be recognised as a centre of creativity with a reputation for cultural and heritage excellence at a regional, national and international level with increased engagement across the town."

The Culture and Heritage Strategy seeks to strengthen and diversify local partnerships in order to secure investment for Reading as leading cultural destination. The delivery of the strategy will:

- Offer diverse opportunities and activities representative of Reading's demography;
- Capitalise on opportunities to expand inward investment within the cultural sectors;
- Ensure culture supports healthy communities and cultural wellbeing; and
- Support work that is inspiring and new, through a commitment to achieving excellence through exemplary projects.

At this time, there are a number of ongoing projects aimed at realising this vision including the relocation of the Central Library, extension of the Hexagon Theatre and an approved extension to the local archives.

A public library service is a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, which identifies that this service is to be provided for everyone who lives, works or studies in an area. Local authorities are also required by The Local Government Act 1972 to make proper arrangements for any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council.

The Council is committed to adopting the Arts Council England guidance (published September and November 2023) on seeking and securing developer contributions for library and archive provision and museum and art provision in England.

This includes a space standard of 6 m^2 per 1,000 population and a series of cost multipliers that relate to that.

Existing provision and capacity issues

The Hexagon theatre is the main arts performance venue in the Borough serving Reading and its wider regional catchment. However, other Council facilities include the Concert Hall and South Street Arts Centre.

In 2007, there was a review of performance arts provision in the Borough, which focussed on the Hexagon theatre and whether it required replacement or refurbishment. There was recognition of the need to provide an updated theatre as a result of this review. The key issue is that the Hexagon is in need of refurbishment and is at capacity. Recently, funding has been secured through the Government's 'Levelling Up' programme to create a new and flexible studio theatre space at the Hexagon for performances and community use and to decarbonise the existing theatre. Further funding is needed to contribute to improvements to the original theatre.

The Town Hall, as well as hosting the Concert Hall, also contains the Reading Museum.

There are seven libraries as well as a mobile and digital service within Reading Borough. Two libraries were moved from standalone spaces to shared buildings in 2018. As part of the Government's 'Levelling Up' programme, funding has been

secured to relocate the Central Library to the Council's Civic Offices in Bridge Street and to create a flexible space with increased digital and learning resources. Additional funding is needed to maximise the value from this project and to respond to the projected increase in residents in the town centre who will use the Central Library as their local library. The other 6 libraries in the Borough remain well-used and in varying condition.

In Reading, the archive service is provided through a joint arrangement with the other unitary authorities in Berkshire. Planning permission has been granted to extend these archives. There is also a substantial backlog of local collections that require cataloguing and conservation work before they can be made freely available to residents.

Impact of Future Growth

Additional growth in the Borough will place increasing demands on the existing cultural infrastructure (both physical and digital) including the Hexagon Theatre, which is a key part of the evening and night-time economy of the town. The level of demand for library spaces and services is also projected to increase, as will the number of collections that require archive storage, cataloguing and conservation work.

Arts Council England modelling is used to calculate the increased demand for cultural facilities that is generated by development.

Priorities for Meeting Need

Options considered are as follows:
- Aspirations for significant accessibility improvements to the Hexagon including digital infrastructure, accessible seating, front and back of house, landscaping to improve the sustainability of the venue;
- Aspirations for significant investment in the Town Hall & Museum; including the redevelopment, of the museum's galleries, such as the Silchester Gallery, the Bayeux Tapestry Gallery, improvements to accessibility and the quality of the Concert Hall and other rooms to improve the sustainability of the venue;
- Improvements for customers at all library buildings, to include both physical and digital infrastructure;
- Improving and strengthening connections between cultural development and other high-quality spaces such as Forbury Gardens and Caversham Court;
- Continue enhancement and improvement of the Abbey Quarter site (Abbey Ruins and Abbey Gate) including improving the setting of the Abbey Quarter site, by ensuring investment in site specifics in the vicinity of the abbey ruins, such the restoration of the listed tombs and key monuments within St Laurence's Churchyard;
- Investment to upgrade storage and public facilities within the existing archive building, and to ensure collections are available for local people to see and use;
- Public realm improvement through conservation and restoration of key monuments, statues, and memorial within the town centre;
- Further investment needed in Reading historic spaces and Registered Parks and Gardens, such Forbury Gardens, Caversham Court Gardens and

> Prospect Parks to ensure further accessibility to wider range of visitors and better tourism opportunities;
>
> - Masterplan for Christchurch Meadows to realise its potential as a destination park;
> - Improvements of interpretation, wayfinding strategy within the town centre, and heritage sites and key major developments to sign post keys tourism attractions and venues; and
> - Improvements to existing public art and establishment of new opportunities and commissions for art throughout the town.
>
> There will be ongoing dialogue to determine cultural infrastructure needs throughout the Plan period.

Community Safety

Table 23: Community Safety Infrastructure Needs

Strategy
The Townsafe Radio Scheme and CCTV network aims to provide a safe and non-threatening environment for people who live in, work in or visit Reading by linking the retail and business communities with the Thames Valley Police. The scheme co-ordinates police activity to reduce crime and disorder in the town. Townsafe is a digital radio system that covers the entire Borough and contains a second channel for use by the emergency planning department. It includes shops, pubs, clubs and offices. Together with the Community Safety Partnership, the Townsafe Radio Scheme and CCTV network aims to: • Prevent and detect crime, • Support the apprehension and prosecution of offenders, • Help reduce losses associated with business crime, • Reduce opportunities to commit crime, and • Work in partnership with relevant organisations.
Existing provision and capacity issues
There are currently three base stations across Reading which facilitate the radio network across the Borough. Taller developments, particularly within the town centre, interfere with the radio network and negatively affect coverage. This may result in the need for additional base stations. The existing CCTV system is aging and in need of replacement. The system is currently managed via Red-Care, a secure BT service using analogue fibre-optic leased lines. As this technology is becoming out-of-date, BT will soon be ending this service due to growing maintenance costs and unreliability. The Council is currently trialling newer communication technologies using an internal secure IP network via wireless and private fibre-optic cables owned by the Council. In the coming years, this network could be expanded to replace the existing Red-Care lines. Most cameras and servers on the network are also in need of replacement. The new software recording system with need encryption to ensure that is it not vulnerable to hacking.
Impact of Future Growth

Growth will increase the need for a modern, up-to-date radio and CCTV network and taller buildings may negatively impact existing systems.

Priorities for Meeting Need

To account for future growth, the Townsafe Radio and Emergency Planning system needs additional radios and signal boosters to increase coverage. The CCTV systems will require upgrades to enable the shift from BT fibre to digital from August 2023 and additional cameras.

6. Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Cycle and e-Scooter Hire	Encouraging active travel and promoting an alternative to car use	Operation and maintenance of publicly available bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme	Cost unknown – LTP block grant, S106, CIL	Ongoing	Reading Borough Council (RBC)
Borough-wide	Physical	Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	Encouraging active travel and promoting an alternative to car use	Local measures to encourage cycling and walking routes, including segregated facilities, lighting, cycle parking, etc.; new areas of development to be connected to existing network	Cost unknown – LTP block grant, Active Travel grant, S106, CIL	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Physical	Major Repair and Improvement Projects	Improving and maintaining existing infrastructure	Continuous maintenance and improvement of existing facilities and infrastructure including retaining walls, culverts, subways, footbridges and flood defence schemes	Cost unknown – LTP block grant	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Schemes	Providing alternatives to car use and encourage sustainable transport use; reduce congestion; improve accessibility and air quality	Dedicated express, limited stop bus-based rapid transit connected to Park and Ride Mobility Hub locations; focused in key areas of growth and key routes in urban areas	Approx. £100,000,000 – LTP block grant, CIL	2024-2040	RBC
Borough-wide	Physical	Network Management, Junction improvements and Road Safety	Increase attractiveness of public transport, reduce congestion, promote sustainable travel and improve road safety	Improvements to existing infrastructure and enhanced provision	Cost unknown– LTP block grant, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Physical	Park & Ride Sites (Mobility Hubs)	Reduce the mode share of trips by car to central Reading, thereby reducing congestion and improving accessibility and air quality	A series of new Park and Ride sites and local transport interchanges will be provided on key routes to Reading	Approx. £30,000,000 – S106, LTP, CIL	2024-2040	RBC, adjoining authorities
Borough-wide	Physical	Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)	Increase attractiveness of public transport, reduce congestion, promote sustainable travel, improve accessibility and air quality	Improvements to existing public transport infrastructure and provision enhancement including bus stops, bus lanes and bus priority at junctions	Costs unknown – LTP block grant, BSIP grant, S106, CIL	Ongoing	RBC, adjoining authorities

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Third Thames Crossing	Reduce congestion	Provide alternative north-south route across the River Thames via a new road, public transport and active travel bridge and associated mitigation measures on the road network.	Approx. £165,000,000 depending on the option – CIL (this figure also depends on nature of mitigation measures on the road network)	Third Thames Crossing	Wokingham Borough Council, RBC, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council
Borough-wide	Physical	Decentralised energy and renewables	To reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough and reduce and stabilise energy costs, through the development of low carbon, localised energy infrastructure, to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and assist in meeting national and local targets for net-zero carbon	Details are not known at this time, but district energy networks will likely be focussed in the town centre	Costs unknown - CIL, Section 106	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Water and wastewater infrastructure	To ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate future growth	There are a number of areas within the Borough including some parts of west and south Reading where Thames Water has identified potential capacity issues with water and wastewater. For these areas, detailed investigations and modelling will be required to determine if local infrastructure upgrade is required.	Costs to be determined by Thames Water with developers	As and when a development comes forward and where issues have been highlighted by Thames Water. Thames Water has indicated that upgrades to assets can take up to three years in lead time. Upgrades to the STW to accommodate future growth in the catchment area will be delivered April 2025 – March 2030 and remain under review.	Thames Water and the relevant developer

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Electricity	To ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate future growth	In order to accommodate development as proposed throughout the Borough and to account for increased electricity demand as a result of net zero requirements, major reinforcement works to the infrastructure would be to be carried out. Additionally, cables and plant equipment may require diverting and relocating as a result of development designs and layouts. Discussions with SSEN are ongoing in order to ensure that grid constraints do not negatively impact growth and do not result in connection delays.	Costs to be determined by SSEN chargeable to developments on an appointment basis.	Ongoing	SSEN

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Physical	Digital connectivity	Increasing Berkshire's full fibre coverage to 85% by 2025, eliminating connectivity 'not spots' within the Borough, optimising use of wireless and small cell technologies	In order to expand advanced, high-quality and reliable electronic communications networks to support sustainable economic growth	Costs to be determined by providers	Ongoing	RBC and private sector providers
Borough-wide	Physical	Air Quality Monitoring	To assess the levels of pollutants at strategic locations where further development is likely to worsen air quality	NOx and PMx analysers, enclosures and associated infrastructure	Section 106, CIL, DEFRA Air Quality Grant	Ongoing	RBC
South	Physical	South Reading BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) and other BRT schemes	Providing alternative modes to car use and encourage sustainable transport use; reduce congestion; improve accessibility and air quality	Dedicated express, limited stop bus-based rapid transit connected to Mereoak Park and Ride, areas of growth and key routes in the urban area	Approx. £55,000,000 (for South Reading BRT, other scheme costs unknown at this time) – LGF, S106, CIL	2024-2040	RBC
Central/East	Physical	Demand management scheme	Improve air quality and/or decrease congestion	Unknown	Costs unknown – LTP block grant, S106, CIL	Unknown	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Central/East	Physical	Town Centre access and public realm enhancements	Reducing the impact of congestion; delivering a higher quality public realm; encouraging healthier lifestyles; improving access to central Reading	Junction improvements; accident remediation scheme; secure cycle parking hub; improved way finding	Costs unknown – LTP block grant, S106, BID	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Green	Open Spaces Strategy	Improve the quality of existing open space and facilities, particularly in larger parks to benefit the wider population	Improvements to strategically important open spaces, masterplan for Christchurch Meadow to develop the area as a high-quality destination park	Costs unknown - S106, CIL, grant funding	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Green	Play Requirements	Some of the current stock of play equipment is more than a decade old. At current levels of use, the quality is declining; an increasing population accelerates the rate of decline such that equipment needs to be continually refreshed.	Continuous investment is needed simply to sustain existing provision and to ensure that it is safe. Because many of the Council's 55 play areas are used to capacity, increases in the local population will require additional equipment. Equipment may need to be updated to meet the needs of children with special needs and children of a variety of ages.	Costs unknown - S106, CIL, grant funding	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Green	Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategies	To protect, enhance and increase biodiversity in parks, open spaces, allotments, cemeteries, woodland, watercourses, riparian corridors and wetland areas.	Reading's Biodiversity Action Plan identifies a number of actions including: enhancing and increasing habitats for plants and wildlife; creating links between existing habitats; increasing plan diversity across grassland open spaces; eradicating invasive species; establishing native species; improving existing and planting additional hedgerows; improving diversity of tree species in woodlands; improving and enhancing the Borough's watercourses and riparian corridors.	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	EA, RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Green	Allotment Creation & Enhancement	Ongoing development pressure on existing private allotments. Very long waiting lists for allotments which will be exacerbated by population growth	To improve allotment provision within the Borough, especially in the North and West	Dependent on funds becoming available or a development opportunity making land available	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Updating and improving Reading's indoor and outdoor sports provision	Increase capacity to account for increase in residents and projected increase in demand, lack of provision of artificial turf pitches	Increased capacity at existing indoor facilities, more artificial turf pitch capacity, improvements to grass pitches and pavilions	Costs unknown	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Police Facilities	To make communities safe, increase public confidence, reduce costs by improving efficiency, improve service delivery and improve outcomes for victims of crime, as well as to aid in the prevention and investigation of crime with ANPR cameras	Premises – new police station in South Reading, touchdown space in central Reading and other areas.	Costs TBD	Ongoing	Thames Valley Police (TVP)

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Digital policing equipment	To make communities safe, increase public confidence, reduce costs by improving efficiency, improve service delivery and improve outcomes for victims of crime, as well as to aid in the prevention and investigation of crime with ANPR cameras	Digital policing equipment including smartphones, tablets, body-worn video cameras, vehicle Wi-Fi and other capabilities, including enhanced and new ANPR cameras at strategic locations within the Borough	Each ANPR camera costs approximately £11,000. Digital policing kit costs approx. £6250 per officer.	Ongoing	TVP
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Townsafe and Emergency Planning Radio Scheme	To provide a safe and non-threatening environment for people who live, work or visit Reading	Signal boosters to address the negative impacts of tall buildings on the network, new equipment and software to provide a modern and secure system	CIL	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	CCTV system	To provide a safe and non-threatening environment for people who live, work or visit Reading	Up-to-date CCTV software with high encryption, replacement of existing BT fibre system, new cameras, rollout of wireless CCTV technology	CIL	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Primary and Secondary Education	Further detail is forthcoming, but early discussions have indicated that there is unlikely to be a need for new school places generally, although an increase in specialist provision may be required, as well as a reconfiguration of SEND places and facilities.	TBD	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Early years	Increased demand for childcare places following changes to entitlements for children 9 months and older	Remodelling, creation and modification of settings	DfE, CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC, private, voluntary and independent settings, as well as schools and childminders

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Primary Care	Additional capacity at existing surgeries associated with development and reconfiguration or relocation of any existing sites that are not fit-for-purpose, restructuring of surgeries into fewer, larger more fit-for-purpose facilities that provide a wider range of co-located services	Larger, fully-fitted facilities provided by the developer on the ground floor(s) of new build flatted developments in the centre; larger hubs located throughout the Borough	Costs unknown – CIL, S106 The Integrated Care Board considers the following costs per sqm to be appropriate (as at Oct 2023 and to include VAT and professional fees) as follows: • New build and extensions (involving land purchase) - £6,310 psm • Extensions (no land purchase) - £5,692 psm • Internal refurbishments/reconfigurations - £3,750 psm	Ongoing	RBC, BOB ICB
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Specialist and Hospital Care	Additional floorspace to provide a modern service, relocation of some hospital services (such as diagnostics and some outpatient care) to hubs distributed throughout the Borough, any infrastructure needed to enable the relocation of the RBH (if relocation is needed)	An increase in floorspace will be required on-site if the RBH remains in its current location in order to provide a modern service. This will also require increased digital 'smart hospital' technology and infrastructure associated with net-zero carbon operations	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC, BOB ICB, RBH

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Adult Social Care Accommodation	Some existing sites are aging and in need of repair; significant rise in the number of older residents projected throughout the Borough	New, purpose-built facilities to relocate existing residential care that is not fit-for-purpose	Costs unknown – CIL, S106. More specific commissioned needs expected to emerge in early 2024.	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Historic sites and parks and gardens	Need to ensure further accessibility and a wider range of high-quality opportunities for visitors	Schemes needed at Forbury Gardens, Caversham Court Gardens and Prospect Park	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Public realm improvements through conservation of key monuments, statues and memorials	Restoration needed to improve monuments, statues and memorials and their settings	Specific schemes to be determined	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism – preservation of historical collections	To ensure ongoing safe storage and public access to archive collections from across Berkshire	Specific schemes to be determined	Costs unknown but to be agreed with the other five Berkshire councils through the Archives Board	Ongoing	RBC
Borough-wide	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism - Improvements to existing and establishment of new public art	To create an interesting and high-quality public realm for residents and visitors	Specific schemes to be determined	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Improvements to interpretation and wayfinding strategy	To contribute to clear network of key attractions and venues	Specific schemes to be determined	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Continued enhancement and Improvement of the Abbey Quarter	Need to ensure setting of the Abbey Quarter site is of high-quality	Restoration of listed tombs and key monuments within St Laurence's Churchyard, other schemes to be determined	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Town Hall and Museum	Need to intensify use and ensure financial sustainability through redevelopment	Significant investment in and remodelling of the museum's galleries	£500,000 – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism Relocation of Central Library to Civic Offices in Bridge St	To create additional capacity and provide a more flexible space with increased digital and learning resources	New central library delivered within an extended Civic Offices	£8.6 million secured as of Nov 2023, further funding needed – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism – Ongoing improvements to library network buildings	To improve the space in libraries, prioritising the branch library network	Building and internal improvements. 3 of 7 libraries do not have public toilets, for example	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC

Location	Type	Scheme	Need for Scheme	Scheme Requirements	Capital Cost and Funding	Timescales (where known)	Lead Delivery Agency
Central/East	Social and Community	Culture and Tourism -- Refurbishment and expansion of the Hexagon Theatre	1970's-built Hexagon Theatre is limited due to its age and design	To revitalise the existing theatre and to create a new, flexible space for performances and community use	£13.7 million secured for extension as of Nov 2023, further funding of approximately £4 million needed to revitalise original theatre – CIL, S016	Ongoing	RBC
North	Social and Community	Leisure -- Masterplan for Christchurch Meadows	To realise its potential as a destination park	Masterplan and implementation	Costs unknown – CIL, S106	Ongoing	RBC

7.   Review and Monitoring

7.1   It is essential that the infrastructure delivery schedule is kept up to date and regularly monitored to ensure that future growth is achievable and supported by the necessary infrastructure. The IDP will be reviewed regularly via the Annual Monitoring Report or an alternative monitoring process.

7.2   One area which will need to be kept under review is development located in neighbouring authorities on the boundary of the Borough. This will affect existing infrastructure capacity within the Borough and current Reading Borough residents who access services within adjacent authorities.

7.3   There will be ongoing liaison with the Berkshire Skills and Business Hub to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to infrastructure provision over the Plan period.