

Examination of the Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update

Reading Borough Council Hearing Statement for Matter 12: Monitoring

January 2026

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Note: In all Council Hearing Statements, references to the Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) are to the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Partial Update showing tracked changes [LP003b] unless otherwise specified.

Issue 1: Does the LPPU have a clear and effective framework for monitoring the implementation of the policies?

12.1 Does the LPPU contain an adequate framework for monitoring the implementation of its policies? Are the monitoring indicators and targets sufficiently precise to be effective? Is it clear what action will be taken if targets are not met?

12.1.1 Yes, the LPPU contains an adequate framework for policy monitoring. The changes proposed at LPPU stage relate to new levels for development need and levels and locations of planned provision, as well as matters such as extending the target to the end date of the plan.

12.1.2 There is not an indicator for every policy, as past experience is that this becomes too unwieldy and requires too many resources, meaning that not every indicator ends up being monitored in any case. Instead, the LPPU sets out a selection of key indicators that can be monitored, generally on an annual basis, and together give a robust understanding of how the plan is being implemented.

12.1.3 The targets are generally precise in nature and often set out a specific percentage or level of floorspace or dwellings that will be monitored. There are some areas such as air quality monitoring where there are existing monitoring regimes in place which monitoring of the LPPU will need to be cognisant of rather than attempting to replace.

12.1.4 The LPPU will continue to be monitored on the same basis as the Local Plan, in that identified indicators will be set out in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) published in December each year. Reading's Annual Monitoring Report always contains an appendix with a table summarising the latest monitoring figure, any running total over the plan period (where relevant) and whether the target is met or not met, or alternatively whether it is on-track or behind. An example is shown in Appendix IV of the 2023-24 AMR [PP008], and this format has been used since the Local Plan was adopted and is intended to continue.

12.1.5 Paragraphs 11.1.3 and 11.1.4 of the LPPU provide some commentary on actions to be taken if targets are not met, specifically relating to whether this will trigger a review of the plan. Paragraph 11.1.4 relates specifically to using the housing trajectory to monitor progress against housing needs. It should be noted that there would need to be a modification to this paragraph as it refers to a shortfall that no longer exists, and instead should refer to general housing provision, and this is set out in Appendix 1.

12.1.6 The Council does not consider that it is necessary or appropriate to be more specific about, for example, the degree of failure or the specific indicators for which missing targets will trigger a review, but the following would be among the criteria to be taken into account:

- The importance of the indicator to the plan, with housing provision for example being more important than the vacancy rate of a particular centre;
- The degree and/or duration of any failure to meet a target; and

- The level of control that the plan can exercise over the indicator.

- 12.1.7 The Local Plan Review from March 2023 [LP011] demonstrates how this information is then taken into account in any decision as to whether individual policies or the plan as a whole requires an update. For instance, paragraphs 3.355 to 3.359 of the Local Plan Review use monitoring data collected in accordance with the indicator and presented annually in AMRs to identify that existing policies have not been sufficiently successful in delivering larger family homes. This in part triggered the need for an update of policy H3 which forms part of the submitted LPPU.
- 12.1.8 Please note that a proposed main modification to Figure 11.1 regarding targets for Gypsy and Traveller pitches was identified in the Inspector's Action List following Stage 1 hearings [EX036] in response to comments made by Bracknell Forest Council and is included in Appendix 1 here for completeness.
- 12.1.9 The Hearing Statement for Matter 3 (question 3.18) discusses a main modification to aid effectiveness of policy H14 to monitor the delivery of the 400 home allowance for Local Authority New Build relating to suburban renewal and regeneration. A proposed main modification is included in Appendix 1.
- 12.1.10 The Hearing Statement for Matter 5 (question 5.9) discusses a main modification to aid effectiveness of policy EN14, specifically to monitor tree planting on Council land and on development sites against targets specified in the policy. This is something the Council already monitors and reports in the Annual Monitoring Report anyway. In addition, a canopy cover assessment in 2030 will be required to assess the effects of the Tree Strategy. This is set out in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Proposed main modifications emerging from Hearing Statement

This Schedule sets out proposed 'main modifications' to the Local Plan Partial Update as a result of the contents of this hearing statement.

For the avoidance of doubt, the modifications and references in the following table show changes to the Local Plan Partial Update Pre-Submission Draft, November 2024 [LP003b].

The above document is already in tracked changes format and shows how the adopted Local Plan (November 2019) would be amended. Please therefore be aware that there are two types of amendments shown in this schedule.

Changes already proposed to be made in the LPPU Pre-Submission Draft [LP003b]:

- Additional text that would amend the adopted Local Plan (2019) is shown in green and underlined: Example
- Deleted text that would amend the adopted Local Plan (2019) is shown in green and struck through: ~~Example~~

Changes proposed as a main modification through the examination process:

- Additional text that would amend the Pre-Submission Draft LPPU (November 2024) is shown in blue and underlined: Example
- Deleted text that would amend the Pre-Submission Draft LPPU (November 2024) is shown in blue and struck through: ~~Example~~

Amendments in blue supersede those in green, so for instance where a change proposed to the adopted Local Plan in green is proposed to be further amended or deleted, this is shown in blue only.

Table A1.1: Schedule of proposed main modifications

Modification Number	Page number [LP003b]	Policy/Paragraph [LP003b]	Main Modification	Reason for Main Modification (linked to soundness requirements)	Reference in this statement
Matter 12 - A	353	11.1.4	11.1.54 Where monitoring, particularly the updated housing trajectory that will be published in the Annual Monitoring Report, demonstrates that there will not be sufficient progress on meeting this shortfall housing targets , the Council will consider the reasons for this, and will consider whether the extent of the lack of progress is sufficient to trigger a full or partial review of the Local Plan.	To ensure that the plan is effective.	Paragraph 12.1.5
Matter 12 - B	355	Figure 11.1: Monitoring Framework	<p><i>Insert two new rows between 'Development in Major Landscape Features' and 'Air quality targets in the UK Air Quality Strategy' as follows</i></p> <p><i>First row:</i> Indicator: Trees planted Relevant policies: EN14 Target: 300 per year on Council land, net gain on development sites Target date: Annual Source: RBC Date: Annual Where presented: AMR</p> <p><i>Second row:</i> Indicator: Borough-wide canopy cover Relevant policies: EN14 Target: 25% canopy cover Target date: 2030 Source: RBC Date: 2030 Where presented: Canopy cover assessment</p>	To ensure that the plan is effective.	Paragraph 12.1.10
Matter 12 - C	357	Figure 11.1: Monitoring Framework	<p><i>In row 'Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches' and column 'Target'</i></p> <p>TBC None 10-17 permanent pitches Transit site for 5 pitches 2 plots for travelling showpeople</p>	To reflect identified needs, reflecting soundness concerns raised by Bracknell Forest Council and highlighted in Inspector's Action List at the conclusion of Stage 1 hearings.	Paragraph 12.1.8
Matter 12 - D	357	Figure 11.1: Monitoring Framework	<p><i>Insert new row between 'Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches' and 'Dwellings delivered and offices lost through office to residential prior approvals' as follows</i></p> <p><i>First row:</i> Indicator: Dwellings delivered through Local Authority New Build as regeneration and renewal of residential areas Relevant policies: H14 Target: 400</p>	To ensure that the plan is effective	Paragraph 12.1.9

Modification Number	Page number [LP003b]	Policy/Paragraph [LP003b]	Main Modification	Reason for Main Modification (linked to soundness requirements)	Reference in this statement
			Target date: By 2041 Source: RBC Date: Annual Where presented: AMR		