

## **West Berkshire District Council Examination Hearing Statement**

### **Reading Borough Council Local Plan Partial Update**

#### **Stage 2 Hearings**

#### **Matter 10 – Site-specific policies**

#### **South Reading**

***Issue 2: Are the policies for South Reading justified, deliverable and consistent with national policy?***

***10.20: Is Policy SR1 justified and effective?***

***Regarding site allocations SR1a, SR1c and SR4e:***

***10.29 Are there any main modifications required to the allocation for soundness?***

1.1 The WBDC Regulation 19 representation highlights concern with regard to policy SR1 and policy SR4, and specifically the site allocations SR1a, SR1c and SR4e, all of which sit within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) surrounding AWE Burghfield. Under the REPP19 legislation a DEPZ must be determined by the local authority where the relevant nuclear site is situated. For AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield, this is West Berkshire District Council. In accordance with the REPP19 legislation the DEPZ, around the AWE sites, was defined in 2020 and is kept under review. The AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan (OSEP) covers the geographic areas of the DEPZ for each AWE site and sets out protective actions which would be implemented without delay to mitigate the likely consequence of a nuclear emergency.

1.2 WBDC continues to have concerns about the inclusion of allocations within the DEPZ and their potential impact on the OSEP. WBDC appreciate that these sites were allocated through the existing Reading Local Plan prior to the DEPZ being defined under the REPP19 legislation. It is also recognised that without these three employment site allocations, RBC would be unable to meet the identified employment land needs. Should these sites remain within the LPPU, WBDC would

request that modifications are made to the South Reading section of the Plan to outline the change in position since the sites were allocated and to highlight the DEPZ as a constraint to development within this area of the Borough. The proposed modifications set out below are intended to factually update the position and increase transparency regarding the DEPZ as a constraint. It is considered these changes are necessary for effectiveness of the policies within the LPPU.

### 1.3 Proposed modifications to Chapter 6 South Reading of the Reading Local Plan Partial Update:

<b>Section / Policy / Para no. / Figure</b>	<b>WBDC proposed modification</b>
6.1 Area Context	Provide additional text within this Section (Area Context) to outline the presence of AWE Burghfield within neighbouring West Berkshire and to highlight the importance of the DEPZ as a constraint to development within the South Reading area.  This modification provides context for the proposed new principle j in 6.2.1.
Figure 6.1 Area strategy for South Reading	Include DEPZ on Figure 6.1
Paragraph 6.2.9	Include additional text within this paragraph to highlight that this is the specific part of South Reading that sits within the DEPZ.  This would be a factual updated position to outline that since the sites in this area were allocated the DEPZ poses a new constraint that needs to be fully considered as part of any planning application.
Policy SR1 parameter ix.	For consistency with policy OU2, amend ix. to make reference to the defence related operations and capability of AWE.
Policy SR1	Clarity needed on sentence preceding SR1a regarding what is meant by 'surrounding areas'.
Paragraph 6.3.2	Include additional text within this paragraph to outline that the DEPZ is also a constraint in this part of South Reading.
Figure 6.2 Island Road Major Opportunity Area Strategy	Include DEPZ on Figure 6.2  Amend typo in Key – Sub Areas SR2a and SR2c to read SR1a and SR1c
Policy SR4e	For consistency, amend final bullet to read the same as ix. (as proposed to be amended) in policy SR1