Local Plan Review
Have Your Say on the Future of Your Borough

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION
Summer 2020
Review of the Bedford Borough Local Plan

The next local plan will mainly focus on developing a strategy to guide housing and employment growth and identify the infrastructure needed to support it.

It will also look at policies around tackling climate change, protecting the natural environment, quality of development, the provision of open spaces, self and custom build homes, the location of food outlets to ensure a healthy Borough, and the town centre.

We have provided this presentation in place of the drop in sessions we would ordinarily be holding. We hope that you find it helpful.
Issues and Options Stage

This is the first step in preparing a new plan. Its purpose is to gather comments on the issues that the plan should cover and options for addressing those issues. Finding acceptable sites to deliver the new housing need number is likely to be a significant challenge.
Scope of the plan

It is the council’s view that the majority of the policies in Local Plan 2030 will not need to be updated because the plan was recently adopted in January 2020.

We do have some policies which are older and local evidence or national guidance may suggest that adopted policies will need to be brought up to date.
Through the review we propose to:

• develop a strategy and allocate new development sites to accommodate growth in line with national policy requirements
• include new policies for the repurposing of the town centre
• include policies to improve the quality of development
• include a policy to deliver self & custom build opportunities
• consider the need for additional policies to address climate change
• consider the need for policies to control the location of food outlets
• consider the need to update open space standards to be provided alongside new development
• consider the need to change current policies for the natural environment following the publication of the Environment Act
## Local Plan review timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020</th>
<th>Autumn – winter 2020</th>
<th>Summer 2021</th>
<th>Autumn 2021-Spring 2022</th>
<th>Summer 2022</th>
<th>Autumn 2022</th>
<th>Jan 2023</th>
<th>Throughout 2023</th>
<th>Winter 2023</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence base gathering</td>
<td>Consider responses to Issues and options consultation and call for sites information</td>
<td>Draft plan consultation</td>
<td>Consider submissions to draft plan and prepare plan for submission</td>
<td>Plan for submission consultation</td>
<td>Consider responses to plan for submission consultation and prepare final plan and supporting documents</td>
<td>Submit plan to Planning Inspectorate</td>
<td>Examination in Public involving public hearing sessions</td>
<td>Adoption of plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues and options consultation</td>
<td>Undertake site assessments</td>
<td><strong>we are here</strong></td>
<td>Consider options</td>
<td>Prepare draft plan</td>
<td><strong>we are here</strong></td>
<td><strong>we are here</strong></td>
<td><strong>we are here</strong></td>
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Timetable continued

The responses to this issues and options consultation will help us write a draft plan, which you will have an opportunity to comment on in mid-2021.

This will help us gauge public reaction to proposed draft allocations and policies and make changes to improve the plan.

A further consultation on a final ‘plan for submission’ will take place during summer 2022, after which we will consider responses and submit the plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination. We are required to submit a plan by January 2023.
How much growth?

- The Oxford-Cambridge Arc-wide spatial strategy or framework is not yet agreed.

- At the present time there has been no specific suggestion from Government that Bedford should plan for a housing figure over and above its own requirements.

- Annual housing requirements are set by Government based on a formula called the standard method. It looks at population projections and affordability to calculate housing need.

- Bedford’s annual housing requirement calculated in accordance with the standard method is currently 1,305 dwellings per annum.

- If the base date of the plan is 2020 and the end date of the plan is 2040, using the 1,305 figure there would be a need to plan for 26,100 dwellings over a 20 year plan period. For comparison purposes this is a 35% increase on the adopted Local Plan 2030 figure of 970 dwellings per annum.

- There is however no certainty about these numbers. During the course of the plan preparation period this figure may change. It can change up to the point where we submit the plan for Examination, when at that point the requirement is set / frozen.
How much growth? …continued

There are two reasons why the numbers may change:
1. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) figures for affordability are published annually (and may therefore change when new data is published in March 2021, and again in 2022);
2. The Government has announced that it intends to review the standard methodology this year which may give us a very different housing target.

Due to the need to submit a reviewed plan by January 2023, as mentioned earlier, we need to press on.

Taking account of the uncertainties this consultation seeks views based on a housing figure in the range of 800 – 1,305 dwellings per year. The 800 figure represents an estimate of the possible figure if the standard methodology is reviewed and based on the 2018-based population projections rather than the 2014-based figures that are currently used in the formula.
How many new homes are needed?

Once existing commitments, currently around 11,000 dwellings, are taken into account (including allocations in earlier local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning permissions granted) we may need to make new allocations to provide between 5,000 and 15,000 additional new dwellings over a plan period 2020-2040, depending on the Government’s formula.

This is because 800 – 1,305 per year, over 20 years (2020-2040) = 16,000 - 26,100 homes
800 x 20= 16,000 take away 11,000 already committed = 5,000 homes to allocate
1,305 x 20= 26,100 take away 11,000 already committed = 15,100 homes to allocate
If the plan period were to be 25 years (2020-2045) we would need to allocate between 9,000 and 21,625 additional new dwellings.

It is clear that a new strategy is needed and it is important to note that new housing growth will need to be supported by infrastructure, jobs, shops and other facilities and these topics will equally be considered in the new local plan.
Where should the development happen?

The consultation paper and summary leaflet illustrate some of the locations where development could take place on six diagrams, copied below. They include more information about some of the pros and cons of each location. These are not options which relate to particular places on the ground. They illustrate the principle of locations. It is likely that the plan strategy will need to include a combination of these locations and others. Can you suggest any?
Links with the Bedford Town Centre Plan

Considerable work has already been carried out separately to develop a Bedford Town Centre Plan which has recently been approved.

The Bedford Town Centre Plan sets out a vision, built on Bedford being a great place to live, work, shop, learn and explore.

The consultation in 2019 received over 2000 responses, ideas from Bedford Borough residents and beyond have contributed to the plan. They overwhelmingly highlighted the river as their favourite aspect of the town centre, as well as many of Bedford’s independent shops and were keen to see a greater diversity of provision in the town centre including more opportunities for leisure activities.

The local plan will work alongside the Bedford Town Centre Plan to help deliver its priorities. There is an opportunity in this issues and options consultation for you to offer additional views about the town centre and how the local plan can support its renaissance.
A call for sites

The new local plan will identify land for development by allocating sites. These sites will be for new housing, employment and other uses where required and will be in addition to sites already allocated in the Local Plan 2030 and the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (adopted 2013).

It is important that the Council allocates a range of development sites that will maintain a five year supply of housing land. The plan must contain sites that will, alongside those already allocated, deliver relatively quickly as well as sites that cater for longer term requirements.

As part of this consultation, we are inviting landowners and other interested parties to propose sites to the Council that they think would be suitable for development. All sites proposed will be considered for inclusion in the plan.

Submit sites by 14th August.
How to get involved

If you live in Bedford Borough you should receive this leaflet through your door.

You can read the full consultation paper on our website or at the Customer Service Centre (see details later). Your local parish or town council also has a copy.

This is the start of the plan process – Have Your Say.
How to get involved

Ideally we would like to receive you consultation responses and your site submissions electronically though our online system

www.bedford.gov.uk/localplanreview

The page also provides further information, FAQs, and everything you need to help you take part in this consultation.
The local plan review **web page** is the ‘go to’ page for information and ways to contact us.

On there you will find:

- The consultation paper
- A summary leaflet (also to be delivered to all households in the Borough)
- Supporting documents
- Frequently Asked Questions that will be updated as the consultation progresses
- A link to respond to the consultation on-line
- A link to submit a potential development site on-line
- A response form to download
- A site submission form to download

[www.bedford.gov.uk/localplanreview](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/localplanreview)
You can **submit details of a potential development site** by

Completing the on-line form; the easiest and quickest way, at [www.bedford.gov.uk/localplanreview](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/localplanreview)

Downloading the site submission form and returning it attached to an email to planningforthefuture@bedford.gov.uk

Sending a completed paper form (with a stamp) to:
Planning Policy Team
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Please do not submit your consultation response or site submission more than once – there is no need to send both electronically and in paper.
If you have a **query**

- Check the FAQs. If your query is not covered:

  - Email your question to planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk and we will email you back (please put ‘consultation question’ in the email title) or

  - Call 01234 718300 where you can leave a brief message outlining your query and a number we can call you back on. We will monitor these and ensure the most appropriate officer calls you back within three working days.
Key dates for this consultation

14th July 2020  Consultation and call for sites start.

14th August 2020  Call for sites ends - submit sites by 5pm today.

4th September 2020  Consultation ends.

It is important to note that the closing dates for the consultation and the call for sites are different.
Thank you for your interest and for taking the time to read this presentation.

We look forward to receiving your responses.