

Bath & North East Somerset Placemaking Plan

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ID/3: MATTER 24– RURAL AREAS JOB GROWTH

Issue 1 - Whether the policies contained in the Placemaking Plan would secure the delivery of 500 jobs in the rural area?

Q1. Is sufficient land identified to secure the delivery of 500 jobs?

1. As set on the Council's statement on matter 2, issue (overall requirements) most of the economic growth planned for in the District is directed towards the city of Bath and the market towns, with only a relatively modest amount of job growth anticipated in the rural areas. This job growth will be delivered principally through small scale development in accordance with the policy framework established through the Core Strategy and the Placemaking Plan.
2. The Core Strategy outlines a requirement to provide around 500 jobs in the rural areas between 2011 & 2029. As set out in the Council's statement relating to Matter2, Issue 2: Overall Approach Oxford Economics 2015 workplace projections indicate that B&NES has experienced net jobs growth of over 5,200 jobs in the period 2011 – 2016 as outlined in the review of Employment Projections (CD/PMP/G31). Analysis of relevant data sets including APS Resident jobs, APS Workplace jobs and BRES Workplace Employees in Employment suggest that progress on meeting the jobs target has been good in all parts of the District. Of the 700 net new jobs expected up to 2029, a net of 600 was evident by 2016.
3. Within the rural areas the Placemaking Plan allocates one site (SR14, Wheelers Block Works in Timsbury) for employment development as an element of a mixed use scheme. The policy framework of the Plan also facilitates the provision of additional small scale employment development via a number of policies.
 - Policies RA1 and RA2 support the provision of employment development at the relevant villages of a scale, character and appearance appropriate to the village
 - Policy RE1 enables small scale employment uses to come forward in the countryside (outside the scope of Policies RA1 and RA2) primarily through conversion, redevelopment, intensification and limited expansion
 - Policy RE3 facilitates job growth by supporting appropriate farm diversification schemes
 - Policy RE6 is supportive of the appropriate re-use of rural buildings for employment development
 - Policy ED.2B both protects existing space and is supportive of provision of additional business uses space at existing non-strategic industrial premises

4. Expansion and provision of additional business space at existing premises/business parks (as supported by Policy ED.2B) is likely to be one of the key opportunities for delivering job growth in the rural areas. The Industrial Market Review (CD/PMP/D18) identifies and assesses a number of significant business parks/industrial premises in the rural areas (Cloud Hill Enterprise Park; Farrington Fields; Hallatrow Business Park; and Temple Bridge Business Centre). Although not classified as strategic they provide important sources of business activity in the rural areas, three of which have potential for expansion (Farrington, Hallatrow and Temple Bridge sites). Whilst serving localised markets Industrial Market Review shows that take-up and demand is relatively strong, providing further evidence of likely job growth during the plan period.

5. There are a number of other premises/business parks that provide opportunities for additional job growth not assessed through the Market Review. These include :
 - FBG Trident Works Hallatrow
 - Timsbury Workshop Estate
 - Fairseat Farm Chew Stoke
 - Corston Business park
 - Burnett Business Park

6. In addition there are a number of examples where policies have provided opportunities for the re-use of rural buildings and farm diversification including Littleton Mills Business Park / Tunley Farm Workshops / Priston Mill / Church Farm Corston.