

Bath & North East Somerset Placemaking Plan

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ID/3: Matter 10 – Economic Development

Issue 1: Whether the policies contained in the Placemaking Plan would secure the additional jobs and increase in office premises set out in the CS in Bath.

Q1. Will the Placemaking Plan secure an overall net increase of 7,000 jobs in Bath?

Q2. Will the Placemaking Plan achieve the net additional increase to the stock of office premises of 40,000 m²?

1. The Council's Statement in response to Issue 2, Matter 2, Question 3 concerning the wider economic growth aspirations of the district, and specifically securing sufficient land to accommodate 10,300 jobs [include reference BNES/PMP/xx] is of direct relevance to this matter. It provides the overall context to the issue of the Placemaking Plan securing an overall net increase of 7,000 jobs in Bath, a significant proportion of which is to be achieved through the net additional increase of 40,000 sqm of office floorspace.
2. It is therefore useful to recap from the Council's earlier statement in that:
 - a. The Core Strategy outlines a requirement to plan for around 10,300 additional jobs (net) between 2011 and 2029.
 - b. For reasons of sustainability the spatial strategy is to focus most of this job growth primarily at Bath and then Keynsham and the Somer Valley.
 - c. Significant economic growth is estimated to take place during the early part of the plan period, before flattening out later in the period
 - d. Oxford Economics projections indicate that there has been an increase of over 6,700 jobs in B&NES between 2011 -2016 (West of England LEP employment forecasts) (CD/PMP/G31) . Analysis of relevant data sets including APS Resident jobs, APS Workplace jobs and BRES Workplace Employees in Employment suggest that the main focus of the jobs growth has been Bath, with modest growth in the market towns and rural areas.
 - e. Within Bath most of the additional jobs are projected to come forward in office based sectors and allocations are made, primarily within city centre/edge of centre locations, capable of delivering significant amounts of new office floorspace (in line with the net additional figure of 40,000 sq. metres set out in Policy B1).
 - f. These allocations (as well as those in other part of the District) have been viability tested (CD/PMP/S2) showing that the proposed land use mix and the plan's policy requirements can be viably delivered.

- g.* Evidence provided through the Bath Office Market Review (CD/PMP/DM23) also shows that there is significant demand for good quality office space in central locations which is currently constrained by the lack of new well located grade A space.
3. The Placemaking Plan alone cannot achieve the net increase of jobs, instead the approach of the Placemaking Plan is to create the conditions for this to be achieved. It seeks to achieve this by providing a positively worded policy framework coupled with the allocation of appropriate sites for the delivery of new employment floorspace. There is an expectation on each of the relevant site allocations about how much office floorspace should be delivered when development proposals come forward, and the total expectation adds up to in excess of 65,000sqm. A degree of flexibility or contingency is provided to ensure the delivery of this corporate priority. The delivery of these sites is supported by the Viability Appraisal.
 4. The Council is committed to achieving the delivery of these jobs, and has invested significantly on public infrastructure to enable development to proceed. Over £70m has been allocated by the West of England LEP to enabling infrastructure projects within B&NES, including public realm, flood mitigation and transport projects, and a number of schemes are underway. These infrastructure works include the Bath Quays Waterside project, currently being delivered on site, and which will put in place essential flood mitigation and flood defence works to the north and south banks of the river. The flood mitigation will enable the redevelopment of the Bath Quays and Manvers Street sites in order to realise the Council's 'Bath Quays' project deliver approximately 25,000 sqm of grade-A office floorspace, creating up to 3,000 new jobs. In addition, the Council is leading on the delivery of a new pedestrian and cycling bridge between North and South Quays.
 5. The Council's flagship regeneration project is Bath Quays, comprising Bath Quays North and the Bath Quays South. The planning application process for these sites is progressing and it is anticipated that planning applications will be submitted before the end of 2016. The combination of both of these important sites is projected to deliver approximately 30,000 sqm of grade-A office floorspace during the plan period creating up to 3,000 new jobs.
 6. A key element in the Bath Quays South site is the provision of a new 5,750 sqm headquarters office building for the retention of BMT, an important Bath based business. The Newark Works building is proposed to be transformed into approximately 4,000 sqm of creative workspace.
 7. Planning permission was granted in February 2016 for the redevelopment of the Pinesgate site within the site allocation SB7 Green Park Station West and Sydenham Park. The planning permission was for 15,000 sqm of Grade A office space and a 16,500sqm self-contained international college campus.

Q3. Do policies ensure that the focus of new office development is within and adjoining the city centre?

8. The allocated sites within the central area are required to deliver 60,000 sqm of office floorspace. This approach ensures that the focus of the new office development is within and adjoining the city centre, in accordance with NPPF.
9. The Bath Press and Roseberry Place site allocations, which are outside of the Central Area, are required to deliver a minimum of 1,500 and 6,000 sqm GIA respectively. These sites are in close proximity to Oldfield Park Train station, and for this reason, as a public transport interchange, are considered to be an edge of centre location (NPPF, Annex 2 Glossary). In addition they will help to diversify the range of employment premises available to the market.
10. The table below specifies the office floorspace requirements for the relevant allocated sites within Bath.

Site	Office floorspace sqm	Spatial Location
Cattlemarket	2,500	Central Area
Manvers Street	9,000	
BQN	20,000	
BQS	9,500	
South Bank	5000	
Green Park Station West	0	
Sydenham Park	14,000	
Bath Press	1,485	Outside Central Area, but within Enterprise Area and close to public transport interchange
Roseberry Place	6,000	
TOTALS	67,485	

Q4. Will policies in the Placemaking Plan support a multi-skilled workforce and multi-faceted economic base by retaining a presumption in favour of industrial land in the Newbridge Riverside area?

11. This presumption is made explicit in Policy B3 of the Core Strategy, and is further supported by Policy ED.2A from the Placemaking Plan which allows for the protection of 'Strategic (*) And Other Primary Industrial Estates'. In Bath, the Newbridge Riverside (Brassmill Lane, Locksbrook Road Estate and The Maltings is protected by this policy. This is supported by the Industrial Market Review (CD/PMP/DM18)
12. The additional wording put forward to policy B3 is intended to encourage and allow further intensification of the important employment role of this area.