

**Bath and North
East Somerset's**

Placemaking Plan Launch Document

July 2013



**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**



Bath and North East Somerset
Local Development Framework

The Placemaking Plan will complement the Council's Core Strategy by setting out the development aspirations and the planning requirements for the delivery of key development sites and updating and reviewing the planning policies used in the determination of planning applications. It will focus on creating the conditions for better places, and on providing greater clarity to enable developments to be delivered. It provides the detail to show how development can benefit and enhance local communities.

- What contribution can sites make to the places we want in Bath and North East Somerset?
- What key assets should be protected or enhanced?
- How can you be involved in the discussion?

www.bathnes.gov.uk/placemakingplan

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What is the Placemaking Plan?

The purpose of the Placemaking Plan is to complement the strategic framework in the Core Strategy by setting out detailed development principles for identified development sites and other policies for managing development across Bath and North East Somerset.

The Core Strategy forms part one of the Local Plan. The Placemaking Plan, as Part Two of the Local Plan, now needs to set out a robust and positive planning policy framework to promote and deliver high quality, sustainable, well located development supported by the timely provision of necessary infrastructure and to ensure the aims of national and local sustainable development agendas can be met.

Like the Core Strategy, the Placemaking Plan will be prepared in the context of **the National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) and facilitate the delivery of key Council strategies such as the Green Infrastructure Strategy, Economic Strategy and the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area. There are a wide range of other corporate initiatives and strategies, including those related to development and regeneration, transport, housing, education, cultural development, climate change, as well as many others that will heavily influence the evolution of the Placemaking Plan.

These initiatives, where they are supported by robust evidence and previous stakeholder engagement, will contribute significantly to the aspirations for development sites and the planning requirements that will eventually be set out in the Placemaking Plan.

Once adopted, the Placemaking Plan will ensure a robust and up to date planning policy framework is in place for the period up to 2029.

National
Planning
Policy
Framework

Core
Strategy

Part 1 of the
Local Plan

Placemaking
Plan

Part 2 of the Local Plan

Sites and Policies

- creating the conditions for better places
- developing a framework for delivery

What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of new development and public spaces. It is fundamentally about responding to the context of a place, through an understanding of its evolution, its functionality, and its impacts. It is then about delivering change that works towards achieving its environmental, economic and social potential.

It capitalises on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good places that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. Placemaking is both a process and a philosophy. Crucially, it involves working in a collaborative way with those who live and work or have an interest in Bath and North East Somerset to discover what their needs and aspirations are and how these can be addressed through the Placemaking Plan.

What the Placemaking Plan will do

The Placemaking Plan will:

- Create the conditions to achieve better places whilst protecting environmental assets particularly sensitive to change
 - Facilitate the delivery of key development sites in Bath and North East Somerset by providing the necessary policy guidance and site requirements to meet Council objectives
 - Help to stimulate development and enable the delivery of planned growth and economic potential
 - Safeguard and enhance the quality and diversity of places in B&NES and identify opportunities for change
- In response to good practice and the localism agenda, be prepared in a collaborative way with key stakeholder and local communities. The process of producing the Placemaking Plan is intended to nurture a long lasting collaborative partnership with the communities of Bath and North East Somerset
 - Act as a focus and a catalyst for getting key agencies and landowners to work together
 - Address how infrastructure requirements will be met and how other obstacles to the delivery of development sites will be overcome and ensuring infrastructure provision is aligned with development
 - Be prepared to be aligned with the production of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)



Core planning principles

National planning policy identifies a number of core planning principles which should underpin all plan-making and these will need to be reflected in the preparation of the Placemaking Plan. They are in brief:

- Empowering local people to shape their surroundings
- Being creative in finding ways to enhance and improve places in which people live their lives
- Proactive in driving and supporting local economic development to deliver homes, business, infrastructure and thriving local areas
- Securing high quality design and amenity for existing and future occupants
- Take account of different roles and characters of different areas
- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate
- Conserve and enhance the natural environment and reduce pollution
- Encourage the effective use of land
- Promote mixed use development and encourage the multiple benefits from use of land in urban and rural areas
- Conserve heritage in a way appropriate to their significance
- Actively manage patterns of growth
- Seek to improve health, social and cultural well-being for everyone

The Core Strategy is key!

In setting out the strategic planning policy framework for the District, the Core Strategy identifies the broad housing and employment numbers, and strategic locations for development. The Placemaking Plan will be expected to help **deliver the strategic objectives** of the Core Strategy:

- Pursue a low carbon and sustainable future in a changing climate
- Protect and enhance the District's natural, built and cultural assets and provide green infrastructure
- Encourage economic development, diversification and prosperity

- Invest in our city, town and local centres
- Meet housing needs
- Plan for development that promotes health and well being
- Deliver well-connected places accessible by sustainable means of transport

All these objectives are key in delivering high quality, sustainable, well located development and are themes that will permeate through the whole Placemaking Plan. The Place-based and Core Policies in the Core Strategy provide the context for the Placemaking Plan:

Core Strategy

Sets the strategic planning framework for:

Bath

Keynsham

Somer Valley

Rural Areas

contains Core Policies which set the strategic approach for:

- Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Retrofitting Existing Buildings
- Sustainable Construction
- Renewable Energy
- District Heating
- Flood Risk Management
- Environmental Quality: High Quality Design, Historic Environment, Landscape, Nature Conservation
- Green Infrastructure
- Green Belt
- Minerals
- Affordable Housing
- Housing Mix
- Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Centres and Retailing
- Infrastructure Provision

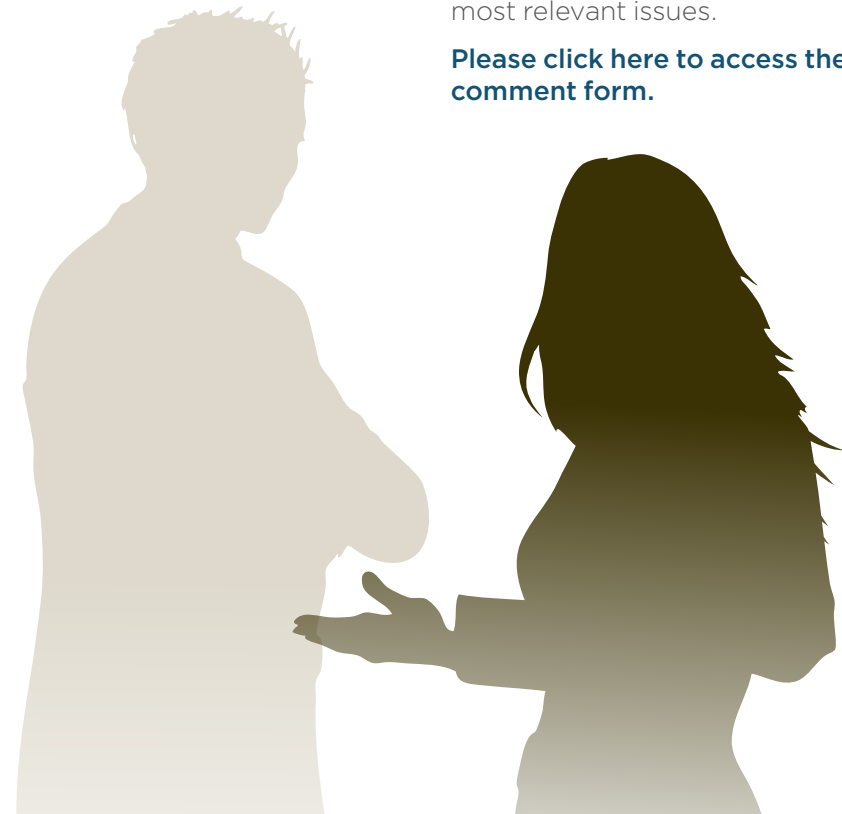
Purpose of the Launch Document

The primary purpose of the Launch Document is to spark debate and discussion about detailed planning issues that need to be resolved. This initial stage in the preparation of the Placemaking Plan provides the catalyst to work with local communities and others involved in the development process. The Launch Document is presented as a discussion document, designed for community and stakeholder engagement and to generate the content for the next stage of the Placemaking Plan.

Now is the chance to comment on the issues and opportunities for key development sites and suggested planning policy framework for considering planning applications in Bath and North East Somerset up to 2029.

You are invited to comment on the proposed scope and content of the plan and to use the discussion points and issues highlighted in this document as a basis for your response on the development sites and policy areas. You may also wish to make comments on whether we are asking the right questions and raising the most relevant issues.

[Please click here to access the comment form.](#)



Link with Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans have been introduced by the Localism Act as a new tier of planning policy. They are to be prepared by a Neighbourhood Forum, such as a Parish or Town Council, and they must be in general conformity with the Council's Local Plan (Core Strategy complemented by the Placemaking Plan). Each Neighbourhood Plan must go through an examination process and be subject to a referendum amongst the local community.

The Placemaking Plan content and process is being designed to encompass neighbourhood planning activities, enabling local communities to properly input into plan making for their area, but with only one examination process that the Council will take forward, and no referenda required.

How can you be involved in the discussion?

Local community engagement

As already mentioned, the Launch Document has been prepared with collaboration in mind. A **programme of collaboration** with the different communities and stakeholders throughout the district will take place **during the late Summer and Autumn 2013**. The output from this collaborative process will inform the preparation and content of the next stage of the Placemaking Plan.

The table on the next page provides an overview of key engagement activities that are relevant to each of the different Placemaking Areas. The approach will be developed and refined through working with a number of pilot communities; however the priorities of the Council will need to be focussed in those areas of most significant change.

Engagement within the Council

This Launch Document will also form the basis of debate and deliberation within the Council. This enables the comments received from external stakeholders to be considered alongside those comments received from different parts of the Council. Many of the events or activities that need to be planned will be undertaken jointly between stakeholders and Council officers. In this way, the Placemaking Plan will be a robust corporate document, reflecting a 'one Council' approach, that can demonstrably be a product of widespread community and stakeholder input.

There are no Parish Councils in the City of Bath and therefore how the Council should work with communities in the City to ensure local views and aspirations are taken into account in the development of sites and formulation of planning policies for Bath will need to be considered carefully.



Overview of External Engagement

Place	Placemaking Area	Activities
Bath	Central Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal and formal discussions with different stakeholder and interest groups. • Organised events and workshops e.g. Drawing on Bath, Bath City Conference. • Visioning, identifying and protecting valued assets, generate placemaking principles and site requirements, identifying infrastructure requests and priorities. • Testing ideas. • Iterative process.
	River Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above.
	Neighbourhood Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom up collaborative approach (where possible and appropriate). • Focused on, and asking questions about future of local centres. • Probably grouped under three themes: thriving, specialist, 'struggling'? • Other issues, e.g. major developments MoD sites, Twerton (Twerton Park), and other major issues requiring a bespoke approach.
	Additional housing adjacent to Bath (subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weston, Odd Down, Ensleigh • Collaborative approach with neighbouring communities. • Identifying Placemaking Plan issues that go beyond the principle of development established by the Core Strategy, and the overarching development requirements.

Place	Placemaking Area	Activities
Keynsham	Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working with Town Council on the placemaking process. • Visioning, identifying and protecting valued assets, generate placemaking principles and site requirements, identifying infrastructure requests and priorities.
	Additional housing adjacent to Keynsham (subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish and Town Council Workshops • Collaborative approach with affected communities. • Identifying issues and options that go beyond the principle of development established by the Core Strategy.
Somerset Valley	Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working with Town and Parish Councils on Placemaking Process. • Visioning, identifying and protecting valued assets, generate placemaking principles and site requirements, identifying infrastructure requests and priorities.
	Other development sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish and Town Council Workshops • Collaborative approach with affected communities. • Identifying issues and options that go beyond the principle of development established by the Core Strategy.
Rural Areas	Whitchurch, RA1 & RA2 Villages, others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish and Town Council Workshops • Collaborative and enabling role. • Toolkit approach. • Visioning, identifying and protecting valued assets, generate placemaking principles and site requirements, identifying infrastructure requests and priorities.

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Development Sites

Introduction

Introduction

The role of the Placemaking Plan will be to create the conditions for the delivery of high quality development on key sites throughout Bath and North East Somerset. It will set out the site specific aspirations, as well as the design, mix of uses, planning and infrastructure requirements to enable these sites to progress. It also adds the detail to the strategic context set by the Core Strategy and will be informed by the other initiatives relevant to each place.

For example, the implementation of the Core Strategy cross-cutting objective on climate change to 'pursue a low carbon and sustainable future in a changing climate' requires consideration of what each site can contribute, i.e.:

- What renewable energy opportunities are there for each site?
- How will the site adapt to a future climate?
- How can the particular use of the site be made as low carbon as possible, be it commercial or residential?

It is essential to recognise that the Placemaking Plan should be read as a whole, so that site allocations and policies are considered at the same time. It also needs to be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy, as this forms part one of the Local Plan, whilst the Placemaking Plan is part two.

The Launch Document suggests proposals for a number of sites for discussion. These sites have arisen from a number of sources including the Core Strategy, the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and other sites which are crucial to delivering the Core Strategy. The Launch Document also provides the opportunity for other sites to be put forward for consideration for allocation.

The Launch Document describes the potential opportunities that these sites offer, floating ideas as a taster and to whet the appetite for further and fuller debate. It is not comprehensive, but is intended to give enough information to stimulate debate and discussion, to elicit responses that can inform the next iteration of the Placemaking Plan, and to form part of the evidence base to demonstrate the options that have been considered.

Please note that the shading on the maps in this section is intended only to broadly indicate the location under discussion. It is not intended to represent a site boundary at this stage.



Bath Overview

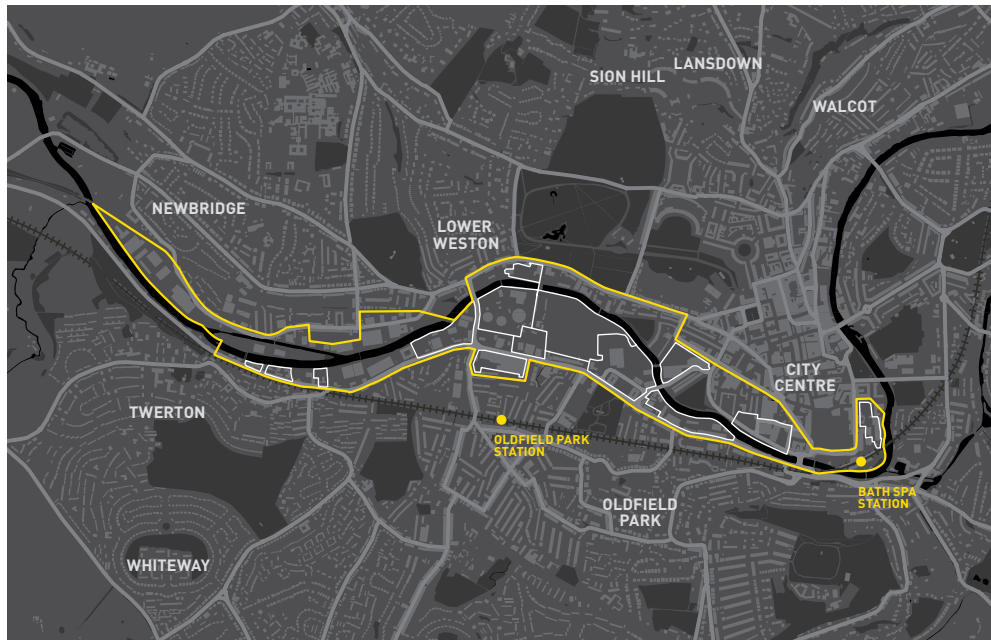
There are a series of significant development opportunities within Bath that need to be taken forward with a vision and aspiration beyond which the city has witnessed since its last transformation over two hundred years ago. This vision and aspiration must however be intelligently applied, informed by a thorough understanding of the qualities of Bath as a place, its outstanding universal value as a World Heritage Site, and its real potential.

Many of the Bath sites that are now being considered for redevelopment are available due to the architectural, planning, development and political failures particularly from the 1950s onwards; when typically the response to context was misunderstood, when cost was often more important than value, and when the need for development trumped the need for quality. The Placemaking Plan advocates a much more sustainable approach to city development.



Development Sites

Bath – Overview



Enterprise Area

Designated as a key zone for economic growth by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area has the ability to deliver 65% of the District's jobs growth by 2026 and play a key role in providing much needed accommodation for the area's flourishing high-value business sectors. Supported by infrastructure, Bath in the future will be a city where businesses, academia and creativity combine to create value and enhance the quality of life.

An uncertain and unpredictable global future, requires an approach to planning that creates the conditions for a thriving, flexible and resilient economy; and one that draws upon Bath's unique qualities as a place; as an incubator of innovative thinking, invention and enterprise; and as an attractor of people who aspire to deliver the very best in creative solutions.

To be successful, an approach is needed that responds both to the drive of the city to be a genuine Enterprise Area, and also to its unique, beautiful and very special environmental conditions.

This position demands fresh thinking, and should be harnessed as a catalyst for a new paradigm in placemaking. These opportunities must not be squandered on short-term financial fixes, or because of fears of entering into uncharted territories. Such approaches work against the essence of the place, and its potential to harness the city's unique and special characteristics that are the bedrock of a sustainable future for the city and the wider Bristol-Bath sub region.

Development Sites

Bath – Overview

The Core Strategy

The Vision and Spatial Strategy for Bath contained in the Core Strategy provides the overarching planning policy context for the Placemaking Plan.

The Vision

What the spatial strategy seeks to achieve

Bath's natural, historic and cultural assets, which combine to create a unique sense of place of international significance, will be secured and enhanced to maintain the city's key competitive advantage and unique selling point as a high quality environment, to live, grow a business, visit and invest.

The scope to further improve Bath's environmental quality will form the foundation of efforts to boost the city's profile as a more competitive and economic centre. The realisation of a range of development opportunities within the Central Area and Enterprise Area will greatly improve the city aesthetically and also enable Bath to position itself as a more entrepreneurial, innovative, creative and business friendly place. Economic development and productivity will therefore be stimulated and facilitated, whilst simultaneously upgrading inherited townscape.

Where possible the built environment will evolve in a more energy and resource efficient manner and renewable and sustainable energy, appropriate to the Bath context will be introduced. Alongside measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to pursue a reduced carbon economy, the delivery of new housing is a vital component of the vision and will help to create a sustainable relationship between the city's labour and job markets and support Bath's economic potential.

The need for more housing will enable the regeneration of many areas within the city. Where development is needed on the edge of Bath it will be positioned, master planned and designed to sustain the 'significance' of Bath's heritage assets and the integrity of its landscape setting. Parallel investment in public transport infrastructure and walking and cycling routes will keep the city moving and enable more sustainable travel choices to be made.

Bath's already strong identity as a therapeutic place will be enhanced by boosting its performance as an enjoyable city for leisure, recreation and shopping with a vivacious cultural scene and a highly valued green infrastructure network.

The Placemaking Plan will be informed by a range of initiatives that include:

- Economic Strategy
- World Heritage Site Setting SPD
- 'Vision for Bath' work
- 'City Identity' Project
- Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy
- The Transport Strategy for Bath (which will be developed alongside the Placemaking Plan)
- the City Riverside Enterprise Area
- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Bath Building Heights Strategy
- River Corridor Strategy



Bath Central Area Priority Development Sites



Planning Policy Context


Policy B2 from the Core Strategy provides the policy context for the Central Bath area. It sets out the role of the Central Area, provides a series of Placemaking Principles, outlines the key development opportunities, and describes the anticipated scope and scale of change.

The role of the Placemaking Plan is to provide the details, and set out how the redevelopment of specific sites can respond to these characteristics set out in Policy B2.



GENERAL EXTENT OF THE CENTRAL AREA

KEY

 City Centre (indicative boundary only - detailed boundary is shown on the Proposals Map)

 Central Area - Areas Neighbouring the City Centre

 Key Development Hotspots

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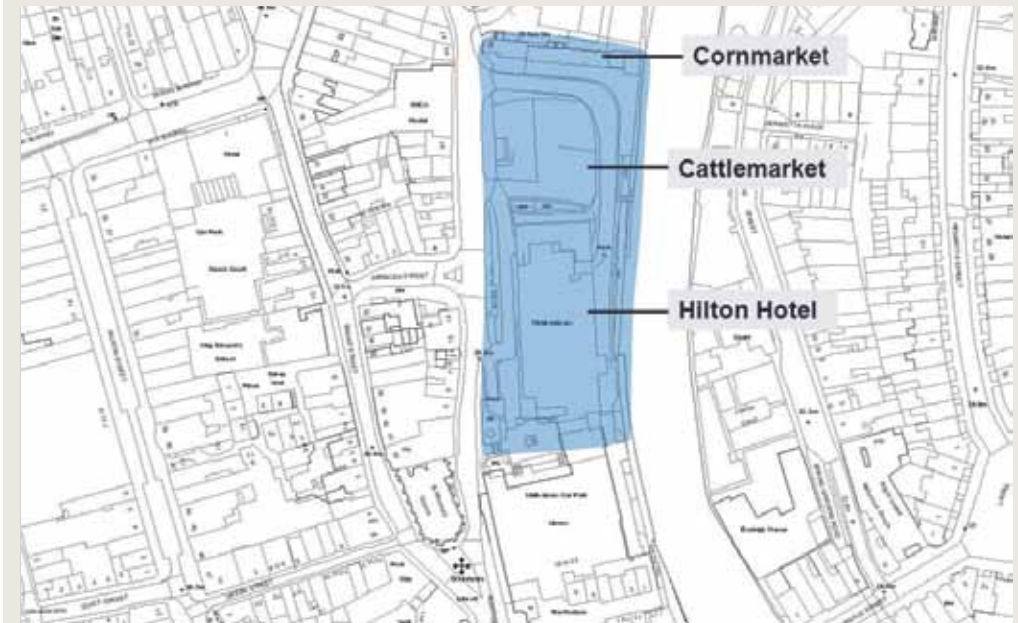


Development Sites

Bath – Central Area Priority Development Sites



SB1 Cornmarket, Cattlemarket, The Hilton Hotel



Located on a key route into and out of the city centre, the Cornmarket and the Cattlemarket site in particular, and one day potentially the Hilton Hotel, provide significant opportunities to remodel the fabric of this area, providing a more engaging experience that links the upper part of Walcot Street to the city centre.

- What should the vision be for this collection of sites? How should it contribute to the character and appearance of the surrounding area?
- How best to connect the gap between the Podium and the Tramshed development?
- What should the relationship be with the street, the Cornmarket and the river?
- Should the development of this area reinforce the character of Walcot Street (finer grained mix of uses – lots of smaller spaces, fewer bigger) or should it be seen more as an extension of the city centre (larger scale, city centre uses)?
- Whilst redevelopment of the site is to be actively encouraged, what opportunities are there for allowing interim buildings and uses on the site? Are there opportunities for temporary uses that could reflect the character of Walcot Street and encourage business start-ups?

Development Sites

Bath – Central Area Priority Development Sites

SB2

Central Riverside & Recreation Ground



Whilst there are emerging ideas for the development of individual sites such as the redevelopment of the Recreation Ground or the conversion of the voids underneath Grand Parade, the Placemaking Plan could suggest a broader vision for the wider area, one that sets an aspirational context for these proposals to come forward.

Is there an opportunity to view this whole area as a transition from the city centre, through the streets and spaces of Terrace Walk, Orange Grove and Grand Parade, into Parade Gardens and over a new river crossing onto the riverside path and the whole of the recreation ground? This could achieve some of the following:

- A series of integrated, sequential spaces and development opportunities;
- The creation of a green heart to the city, with the river in its centre, as a forum for leisure, recreation, entertainment and culture;
- A 21st century interpretation of the historic 'pleasure garden' role of Harrisons Walks;
- An inspirational policy context for the development of a new sporting, cultural and leisure stadium (as established in the Core Strategy);
- Safeguarding valued assets and attributes such as the views across from Grand Parade;

- Do you agree with these broad ideas for this area?
- What other aspects should be considered?
- Should a vision for a new and coherent city quarter be worked up as an important part of the Placemaking Plan?

It would require a masterplanned approach which would identify opportunities to radically remodel this part of the river, changing it into a central feature of this area, and improving access to it via multiple points from the city centre.

Site configuration will allow for a new sporting, cultural and leisure stadium (as set out in the Core Strategy), together with opportunity to explore the potential for the relocation of part or all of the current Avon Street coach park (thereby releasing it for redevelopment), and potentially a new underground car park (releasing more central car parks for development). What are the implications of these ideas?

This site also has potential for hydro power at Pulteney Weir and for district heating/combined heat and power using the swimming pool as an anchor heat load. It is within the District Heat priority area in the draft Core Strategy.



Development Sites

Bath – Central Area Priority Development Sites

SB3 Manvers Street



This collection of development sites provides clear opportunities for an employment led, mixed use development that optimises its proximity to Bath Spa train station, and fulfils some of the aspirations for the city's Enterprise Area. The retention of a public car park is unlikely to be necessary given the proximity of this site to public transport.

This is a prominent and important area that comprises a number of sites extending from the Grade 1 listed South Parade towards the Bath Spa Railway Station, and sandwiched between Manvers Street and the river. It is part of the Enterprise Area, and forms the setting for the Grade 2* listed St John's Church. It is an area with high levels of public transport accessibility, and Manvers Street is a key pedestrian route and entrance into the city.

There are a number of poorly designed buildings and spaces that detract from the image and identity of the area. There are also some existing uses such as the Sorting Office that do not capitalise on their position adjacent to the river nor on their proximity to the city centre and high levels of public transport accessibility.

The listed buildings provide a valued asset which could lend themselves to the creation of a significant new public space that protects the relationship of South Parade to its landscape setting, and provides an appropriate setting to St John's Church.

- The nature of buildings; through their architectural style, their level of innovation, or how the development is delivered and financed, can have significant potential on how a place is perceived. Given the prominence of this area on a key arrival point in the city, what potential is there for development to reflect and articulate the economic development aspirations of the city?
- Should development be delivered on an incremental basis, adding more variety, interest, and more choice? Or should it be comprehensive? What are the pros and cons of these different approaches?

SB4 Bath Quays North



city centre. Alternative parking will be required elsewhere in or on the edge of the city to replace spaces lost in the redevelopment of this site.'

The Bath Quays North area essentially comprises the Avon Street Car Park and the Coach Park. There is a significant opportunity for development to stitch this area back into the fabric of the city centre, to enable an expanded city centre, and to improve access for pedestrians to the riverside environment and beyond.

To achieve this requires careful place shaping, to create the conditions for its regeneration and its successful operation as part of an expanded centre. To provide a network of streets and spaces that seamlessly integrates this area into the city centre and with direct, legible and attractive routes to the river will necessitate the remodelling of adjoining sites. This could enhance the viability and appeal of new development, improving safety for users of new pedestrian routes, and refreshing image of place.

Some public parking may be required to be retained on this site to serve the

- Is this aspiration a viable and deliverable approach for the regeneration of this area?
- What should the relationship be with the river, and with the South Quays area?
- Should buildings reflect the spirit of innovation and new thinking that is the focus of the city's future growth, and also be read as part of the wider city? How distinctive and different should they be?
- The mix of uses should respond to its urban location, its key role as part of the Bath Enterprise area, and its location adjacent to the river.
- Are there opportunities for fine grained and smaller scale employment uses, designed and managed to appeal to targeted small businesses?
- Should there be active ground floor uses and a rich mix of other uses in this area, with residential above to optimise the value of a south facing aspect over the river, and to create a destination location as an expansion of the city centre?
- What role could this area have in accommodating additional retail capacity as an extension to the city centre?

Development Sites

Bath – Central Area Priority Development Sites

SB5 Bath Quays South



The site is bordered by the River Avon to the north. Within the wider landscape context and the important views through and over the site, the immediate context of Bath Quays South is made up of a variety of buildings and built forms. Typically of large scale, massing and at a range of heights, these buildings contain a broad mix of uses including business e.g. engineering design, financial services, car showrooms, and residential. Beyond the site to the south, lie the residential areas of Oldfield Park, Holloway, and Bear Flat.

Buildings in the vicinity tend to form bold relationships with their surroundings; butting up to the river's edge, and forming a strong edge along the Lower Bristol Road. Many of these represent an important part of Bath's innovative industrial heritage, contrasting with the city's more widely known collection of Georgian buildings.

This variety of architecturally bold and robust buildings is unusual in Bath and should inform the architectural response to new buildings on the site. Contemporary architecture could contrast with the sensitive conservation of historic buildings and public realm, to create a compelling mix of new build and remodelled historic buildings providing employment led development that can reflect the spirit of innovation and creativity that the site is historically associated with, and which is promoted as its future.

- Is this a valid and deliverable approach?
- Does this site have the potential to act as a catalyst for further investment and interest in the innovation and creative sectors?
- What opportunities are there to create new pedestrian and cycling routes through the site, connecting the residential neighbourhoods to the south to the city centre? How important is this issue?
- How should development proposals respond positively to the river frontage and provide an engaging experience for users passing through the site, and for enhancing wider cityscape views?

SB6 Bath Western Riverside East



The Bath Western Riverside East area comprises Green Park Station, Sainsbury's, Homebase and their related car parks, the Ivo Peters Way Industrial Park, Pinesgate and the associated road gyratory.

- Whilst the Core Strategy and particularly the Western Riverside SPD provides a policy context for the area, what more detailed information required for this broad area?
- What is the vision for this place e.g. a model sustainable business community or a place for innovative industry and employment?
- How should this area be remodelled to better integrate it with the Central Area, Bath Western Riverside and the surrounding residential communities?
- What should the approach be to the river frontage, to maximise values and benefits, and to increase public accessibility?
- Could the gyratory be removed to enable more development capacity, create more legible development blocks and an enhanced public realm? (Traffic could be routed along the Lower Bristol Road, with two points of access one to serve Bath Western Riverside and the other for access to Midland Bridge).
- Should public transport and cycling routes be provided through the site?
- How does development best respond to the historical or visual cues of the area, including the setting of Green Park Station, other listed buildings and important or strategic views?
- What mix of land uses is appropriate?
- Is retail development appropriate in this location, and how might this impact on the city centre? How significant is the risk of diluting the vitality of the city centre? Is there potential for a specialist retail destination that is complementary to the city centre offer?
- Is a multi-storey car park potentially appropriate within the area to facilitate the redevelopment of Avon Street car park, or is this too far away from the city centre?
- Evening economy – what role should this place play in the evening economy of the city centre?

Bath Twerton and Newbridge Riversides



Introduction

This section of the Enterprise Area contains a wealth of successful businesses, and a significant number in the sectors of design, engineering and technology, including Rotork, Polamco and Herman Miller. The area also contains a number of derelict and underused sites that have huge potential for transformation, providing inspirational locations for economic growth, set in close proximity to key transport infrastructure, residential communities, and an enhanced riverside environment.

TWERTON AND NEWBRIDGE RIVERSIDES

● Key Development Hotspots

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Policy Context

Policy B3 from the Core Strategy has adopted distinct approaches to development at Twerton and Newbridge Riversides, and also provides the strategic placemaking principles for the area:

- Twerton Riverside has contracted as an industrial location in recent decades. This area is suitable for a broader range of uses and there is scope to redevelop the area to provide new business (B1a-c) premises and housing. The area presents an opportunity to host businesses that may be displaced as a consequence of the residential led development of Western Riverside and the growth of the intensification of the Central Area into BWR East. Whilst Newbridge Riverside will remain the core industrial location, Twerton Riverside can provide additional flexibility. It will therefore be necessary to maintain an appropriate level of land in this area for B1c uses alongside office uses and housing.

- Newbridge Riverside will function as Bath's primary location for industrial enterprise, providing about 12 ha of land at Locksbrook Road, Brassmill Lane and the Maltings for a range of activities including advanced manufacturing. There is therefore a presumption in favour of retaining land and premises in the B1 use class where this remains a viable use of land and is supported by market signals that there is demand for continued occupation that cannot reasonably be accommodated elsewhere.

To facilitate delivery of the placemaking principles, where it is considered necessary, the Placemaking Plan will apply policy requirements and design principles to the area and allocated site requirements in relation to land use amount and distribution, conservation of assets, and delivery of infrastructure.

Issues and Opportunities for the broad area

- Enabling Bath to maintain its diversified employment offer by protecting and providing opportunities for a variety of business sectors to thrive, in differently configured employment spaces and in a complementary location to the city centre.
- Enabling / encouraging development proposals to come forward by permitting a broader mix of uses on specific sites and areas which maximise public benefit (environmental enhancement, public transport accessibility). This is to include residential uses.
- Reinforcing the environmental credentials of the area, by:
 - Ensuring that development is built to a low or zero carbon standard, making full use of passive design principles and renewable energy. This would also keep energy costs down for business.
 - Enhancing the riverside environment and green infrastructure for the benefit of the local community, and adding to the city's wider offer.
 - Creating more sustainable cycling and pedestrian routes to and through these areas, and locating higher density development in closer proximity to public transport hubs.

- Retain and Enhance existing heritage assets.
- Protect key World Heritage Site views connecting the area and green hillsides.

The distinct character areas and key site opportunities are as follows:

• Twerton Riverside

(i) Bath Press, Roseberry Place/ Dairycrest/Stables Yard. Herman Miller South.

(ii) Twerton Riverside West / Carrs Wood

• Newbridge Riverside

(i) Locksbrook (including Coach Park, Horstman Gears, Herman Miller Factory and Locksbrook Trading Estate)

(ii) Brassmill (Including Rotork and Brassmill Enterprise Park).

Development Sites

Bath – Twerton and Newbridge Riversides

SB7 Bath Press



The vacant Bath Press building lies to the west of the city centre alongside the Lower Bristol Road and in very close proximity to Oldfield Park Railway Station. Located within the Enterprise Area, this site has an important economic development role to play. An application from Tesco Plc was recently refused planning permission for a store on this site.

- Is there an opportunity to create a specific deliverable vision for this area?

Whilst the building is not listed it is undoubtedly of local significance and the retention of its façade in any redevelopment is likely to be an important consideration.

Redevelopment proposals should ensure that the site's proximity to Oldfield Park Railway Station, as well as local bus services and cycle routes is optimized. This will impact on the density of development and the type and mix of uses on the site.

- Which uses make best use of the public transport benefits of this location?
- Is a comprehensive master planned approach to site design and development a pre-requisite for development?
- Should the 1920's/30's factory façade be retained within the redevelopment of the site?
- Should development protect northerly views across the site through identification and retention of key view corridors?
- Should development enhance walking and cycling routes along the Lower Bristol Road and across between Bath Western Riverside and Moorland Road?

SB8 Roseberry Place / Dairy Crest / Stable Yard



Located on the south side of the river, and on the corner of Windsor Bridge Road and the Lower Bristol Road, this area contains a number of small businesses, but are also under-utilised sites providing significant development opportunities for employment led regeneration.

- What mix of uses are required that optimise its location to sustainable transport infrastructure, complement the Bath Enterprise Area aspirations and relate to the regeneration of Bath Western Riverside and Bath Press? Should this include offices, workshops, retail and residential and what are the specification requirements of these uses? How can development reinforce the relationship between the employment profile and skill base of local people?

- Should regeneration be delivered as part of an incremental strategy undertaken within a comprehensive masterplan, or be a comprehensive development? What are the viability implications of different approaches?
- What opportunities are there to create new connections to the river, and to provide enhancements to the cycle and pedestrian network? For example, connecting the Bristol/Bath cycle route to the 'Two Tunnels' route.
- There are opportunities to enable the delivery of elements of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. How can the natural riverbank be enhanced and what opportunities are there to create new priority species habitats?
- How should the Placemaking Plan protect key views across the site from Windsor Bridge and the connecting views to hillsides?

Development Sites

Bath – Twerton and Newbridge Riversides

SB9

Herman Miller / George Yeo (Lower Bristol Road)



This listed building is situated adjacent to the Lower Bristol Road, between Waterside Court and Polamco, and is currently proposed for conversion into a Lidl supermarket. It may well be the case that planning and development issues are resolved before the Placemaking Plan reaches an advanced stage, but this cannot be guaranteed, neither can the implementation of the scheme.

- What opportunities are there for the innovative re-use of the listed Herman Miller Building?
- How should development provide an active ground floor uses to the main pedestrian routes?

- What opportunities are there to enhance the frontage landscape and how should public access to the riverside be arranged?
- How can green infrastructure and biodiversity be imaginatively integrated into flood defenses?
- How should legible links to Chelsea Road and Twerton High Street local centres be achieved?
- What opportunities are there for public realm enhancement to Fieldings Road?

SB10

Twerton Riverside West / Carrs Wood



This area extends to the west from the Curo headquarters at The Maltings, and contains a number of potential development opportunities adjacent to the river edge all along to the junction with Newbridge Road.

- What development opportunities are likely to come forward within the plan period, and what detailed planning policy requirements should be put in place to get the best outputs?
- What mix of uses is appropriate, and which should be discouraged?
- What opportunities are there for enhancing habitat and biodiversity value of riverside?

- Towards the western end, what opportunities are there for woodland management and landscape enhancement to improve this route as a key entrance into the city?
- Given its green setting, what is the most appropriate form of development in this location?
- Is there a realistic potential of creating a pedestrian bridge connection to Brassmill Enterprise area to increase accessibility?

Development Sites

Bath – Twerton and Newbridge Riversides

Newbridge Riverside

SB11 Locksbrook



The area presents significant opportunities for economic development, walking and cycling improvements and better connectivity, and green infrastructure.

The majority of the Locksbrook river frontage is addressed by blank walls and undergrowth. There is potential to significantly enhance the quality of the riverside path for walking and cycling, leisure and biodiversity within a coordinated strategy.

The route of the disused railway passes to the north of the employment area. There is an opportunity to harness the unused asset to strengthen the economic, access and environmental quality of the area, and provide a new sustainable transport route for pedestrians and cyclists, which could penetrate through the Western Riverside regeneration area. This would reduce pressure and potential pedestrian and cyclist conflict on the river path.

- How could riverside development present more active frontages and surveillance of the riverside walk in order to work towards achieving comprehensive improvements to the quality and appeal of the river area?
- What new land uses could be introduced to address existing conflicts between residential amenity and employment?
- What criteria should be put in place to manage building heights to respect the existing two-storey context and important views?
- How should north south pedestrian and cycling routes (one by the Herman Miller Building, and one over Weston Island) be enhanced?

SB12 Brassmill



This area remains a vibrant centre of manufacturing, distribution and employment, with a variety of industrial and business units. Units to the west end of the Brassmill Lane Trading Estate have fallen into disuse. Many of the existing buildings do not address the river, and Brassmill Enterprise Park presents a poor riverside frontage. It is also adjacent to a residential area and the Bristol / Bath cycle route.

There are clear opportunities for enhancing the image and identity of this area:

- As a place of innovation and world class industrial enterprise through the intensification of some of the existing developed areas, whilst introducing measures to minimize the impact on residential amenity; and

- through making improvements to the riverside environment and wider green infrastructure.
- Does this distinct and partially secluded character area offer the opportunity for larger footprint uses and incremental redevelopment? Where could these go, and how could this be facilitated?
- Is there scope to increase the height of development to an average of three storeys without impacting on the setting of the World Heritage Site from longer views with the strengthening of tree cover? How should the Placemaking Plan best control the height of new development in the area?
- Green infrastructure and habitat creation in this stretch of the river is a priority. Whereas the creation of active frontages is important in the urban riverside setting, the strengthening of its natural quality and wildlife value should lead. How do we best ensure that this is delivered?
- The Bristol-Bath cycle path terminates at Brassmill Lane. Should this be extended along the previously proposed rapid transit route in order to penetrate further into Bath, and to reduce pedestrian and cyclist conflict on the existing riverside path?
- Together with potential development along the Carrs Wood Riverside, are there viable opportunities for new pedestrian connections across the river to link employment and residential communities?

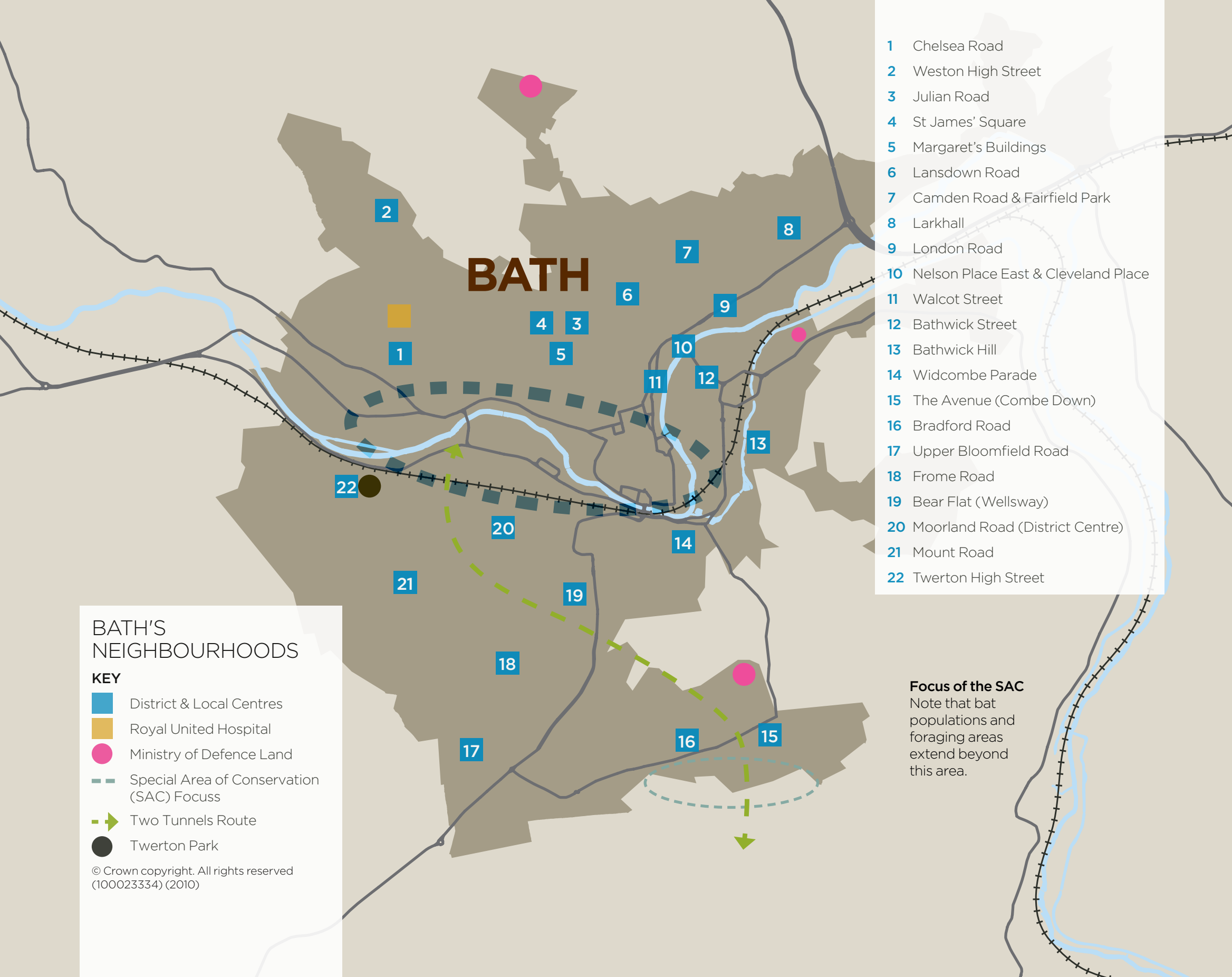
Bath's Neighbourhoods



The Core Strategy recognises the significance of Bath's neighbourhoods, stating that:

“Attractive neighbourhoods with successful local centres, good schools, a well-managed green infrastructure network, valued heritage and sustainable transport choices are necessary for economic success, quality of life and social and cultural vitality.”

The Placemaking Plan will consider in more detail the role and function of these neighbourhoods, in particular their local centres and infrastructure requirements such as schools. It will introduce an appropriate policy framework that seeks to ensure that the aspirations set out in the Core Strategy can be delivered. Much of this is covered in the development management policy section of this document, but there are also some place specific issues of relevance.



BATH

- 1 Chelsea Road
- 2 Weston High Street
- 3 Julian Road
- 4 St James' Square
- 5 Margaret's Buildings
- 6 Lansdown Road
- 7 Camden Road & Fairfield Park
- 8 Larkhall
- 9 London Road
- 10 Nelson Place East & Cleveland Place
- 11 Walcot Street
- 12 Bathwick Street
- 13 Bathwick Hill
- 14 Widcombe Parade
- 15 The Avenue (Combe Down)
- 16 Bradford Road
- 17 Upper Bloomfield Road
- 18 Frome Road
- 19 Bear Flat (Wellsway)
- 20 Moorland Road (District Centre)
- 21 Mount Road
- 22 Twerton High Street

BATH'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

- KEY**
- District & Local Centres
 - Royal United Hospital
 - Ministry of Defence Land
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Focuss
 - Two Tunnels Route
 - Twerton Park

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Focus of the SAC

Note that bat populations and foraging areas extend beyond this area.

Development Sites

Bath's Neighbourhoods

SB13 Generic issues

Bath's neighbourhoods perform many functions, supporting a range of uses and roles that are part of their character and appeal as places to live. Parks, allotments and other open spaces, small scale employment uses, local shops, amenities and facilities such as schools and church halls, all contribute in important but different ways. Collectively they can support more sustainable lifestyles, ensuring good access to a range of services within easy walking or cycling distance. In many cases they are models of the sort of mixed use environments that planning seeks to create in new development, places that attract different people, at different times throughout the day. It is important that the planning policy framework seeks to maintain and enhance these attributes, rather than to see them lost.

In the Core Strategy, one of the most important expectations for Bath's Neighbourhoods is the delivery of new housing as a contribution to the target of the delivery of around 7000 new homes in the city. Proposals for housing development will generally come forward on previously developed sites, many of which may contain existing employment uses.

It is an important role of the Placemaking Plan to manage such change carefully, and to ensure that the loss of such employment sites is not detrimental to the economic aspirations of the city, or to the mixed use vibrancy and functionality of the local area, whilst also delivering housing needs.

- How should the Placemaking Plan seek to maintain the mixed use character of many of Bath's Neighbourhoods?
- What criteria should be applied to assess the existing or potential value of employment sites within Bath's Neighbourhoods?
- Are there opportunities to introduce more of a mix of uses on some of these sites?
- What other uses need to be protected, safeguarded and facilitated through the Placemaking Plan?
- Are there particular areas of land that need to be allocated in the Placemaking Plan for particular uses?

SB14 Local Centres

The district and local centres throughout Bath's Neighbourhoods generally perform important functions as centres for their surrounding residential communities. They do however vary in their offer with some providing a comprehensive range of shops, complemented by other services and facilities such as pubs, restaurants and takeaways, other business, libraries, and village halls, whilst others are very limited.

Should the different centres be grouped into different types that reflect their current role, and potential opportunities? For example:

- Vibrant community centres – primarily serving local needs, and including community facilities such as pubs, clubs, cafés, local library, meeting places, community halls, churches, e.g. Moorland Road, Bear Flat, Larkhall, Weston.
- Specialist or niche retailing centres – not necessarily meeting local needs, but supporting destination type businesses e.g. Margaret's Buildings, Lansdown Road.

- Struggling centres – where occupancy is typically lower than other local centres, such as on the London Road. What other uses should be permitted in these areas? Should office uses be permitted in retail premises? What about conversion to residential uses? Should shopfronts be maintained / protected (subject to listed building considerations), or should a more permissive approach be adopted?

Issues

- What is the vision for these centres?
- Is there a shared vision that can cover the different types of centres?
- Should there be a specific approach to each or can there be a generic approach within the groupings?
- What protection needs to be given to different areas?
- What degree of policy flexibility should there be to allow change in the different types of centres?
- How can policies encourage investment and positive changes in the struggling centres?
- Is there an opportunity to identify infrastructure requirements for each local centre, enabling environmental enhancements to be identified?

Development Sites

Bath's Neighbourhoods

SB15 Major Sites

There are a variety of major sites and issues within Bath's Neighbourhoods that are referenced in the Core Strategy, and which will need to be considered in more detail in the Placemaking Plan.

University of Bath



Land has previously been removed from the Green Belt through the adopted B&NES Local Plan to allow the long term expansion of the University and provide additional student housing and academic space at its Claverton Down campus. Development to provide the additional accommodation required by the University will come forward through the preparation of a revised masterplan for the whole campus. This includes a full and detailed assessment of the appropriate development capacity of the campus including the part removed from the Green Belt.

The University's expansion aspirations over the next 15-20 years may also require looking at additional solutions in or beyond the city.

- How can the Placemaking Plan establish a framework that will ensure the University of Bath best utilises the land removed from the Green Belt in the Local Plan?
- If necessary how should the Placemaking Plan seek to make additional provision for meeting the University's aspirations over the next 15-20 years?

MoD Sites

The Council has produced 'Concept Statements' which contain a vision,



and site specific planning and design requirements to guide the redevelopment of the three MoD sites at Foxhill, Warminster Road and Enleigh. All of these sites have now been sold and it is anticipated that planning applications for their redevelopment will come forward in the near future. The Concept Statements will be used as a material consideration in the determination of these planning applications.

- The inclusion of this policy framework in the Placemaking Plan will afford them more weight in the determination of planning applications, what level of detail needs to be included in the Placemaking Plan to ensure it provides a suitable policy framework for each of the former MoD sites?



Twerton Park



The Core Strategy recognises that Bath City Football Club, who own Twerton Park football stadium, has stated that the site will be available for redevelopment during the Plan period. The site will therefore be available for redevelopment as part of a residential/mixed-use scheme during the Plan period.

The Placemaking Plan therefore needs to consider how the site can best benefit the local centre of Twerton.

- What is the aspiration for Twerton High Street, and how can the redevelopment of this site help to deliver this?
- What mix of uses might be appropriate for this site?

Other sites

- What other major sites are there within Bath's neighbourhoods that need to be contained within the Placemaking Plan?

Development Sites

Bath's Neighbourhoods

SB16

New areas of development adjoining the City – Ensleigh & MoD Ensleigh



The Core Strategy, which is still at Examination, identifies three locations on the edge of Bath where development should take place. Two of these locations (land adjoining Weston and land adjoining Odd Down) require land to be removed from the Green Belt and are addressed below. The third location is the Royal High School Playing Field which adjoins the MoD site at Ensleigh.

Subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination the Placemaking Plan will allocate a site for comprehensive residential led mixed use development comprising the Ensleigh MOD site and the Royal High School Playing Field land adjoining it.

Core Strategy Policy B3 outlines the planning requirements for this location that will inform allocation of the site in the Placemaking Plan and delivery of development through a planning application(s). In addition to allocating the site for development the Placemaking Plan can set out more detailed requirements for development.

- Building on the criteria set out in the Core Strategy and the Concept Statement for the MoD Site, what further detail is needed to ensure these objectives can be achieved?
- How can development best be integrated into the existing context?
- What criteria are needed to safeguard the landscape and visual impacts of development?
- What transport and movement connections are required, and how can public transport be enhanced?
- What green infrastructure enhancements should be made?
- What community facilities are required either on site or within the existing communities?
- What are the infrastructure requirements?

SB17

New areas of development adjoining the City at Odd Down and Weston

The Core Strategy states that land should be removed from the Green Belt in order to provide for 300 homes adjoining Odd Down and 300 homes adjoining Weston. The Core Strategy also outlines the planning requirements for development (through Policies B3A and B3B respectively). Subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination the Placemaking Plan will identify and allocate the precise sites for development within these broad locations; define a revised detailed Green Belt boundary; and, as necessary, set out more detailed development requirements.

As the Core Strategy is still at Examination and the Inspector has not yet confirmed the way forward regarding development in these locations, the Launch Document does not raise questions in respect of development and comments are not sought at this stage. However, dependent on the outcome of the Examination the Council will undertake the work referred to above with the close involvement of the neighbouring communities. The preferred site and detailed Green Belt boundary options, as well as the options considered but rejected, will be presented for public consultation during the next stage of preparation.



Keynsham

Introduction

The overarching planning policy context for development in Keynsham is set out in the Council's Core Strategy. The Placemaking Plan will provide the necessary policy detail on sites, creating the conditions for the evolution of the town to meet the aspirations set out in the Core Strategy, and in Keynsham Town Council's Town Plan.

The process of producing the Placemaking Plan will focus on targeted collaborative working particularly with Keynsham Town Council and other stakeholder and community groups.

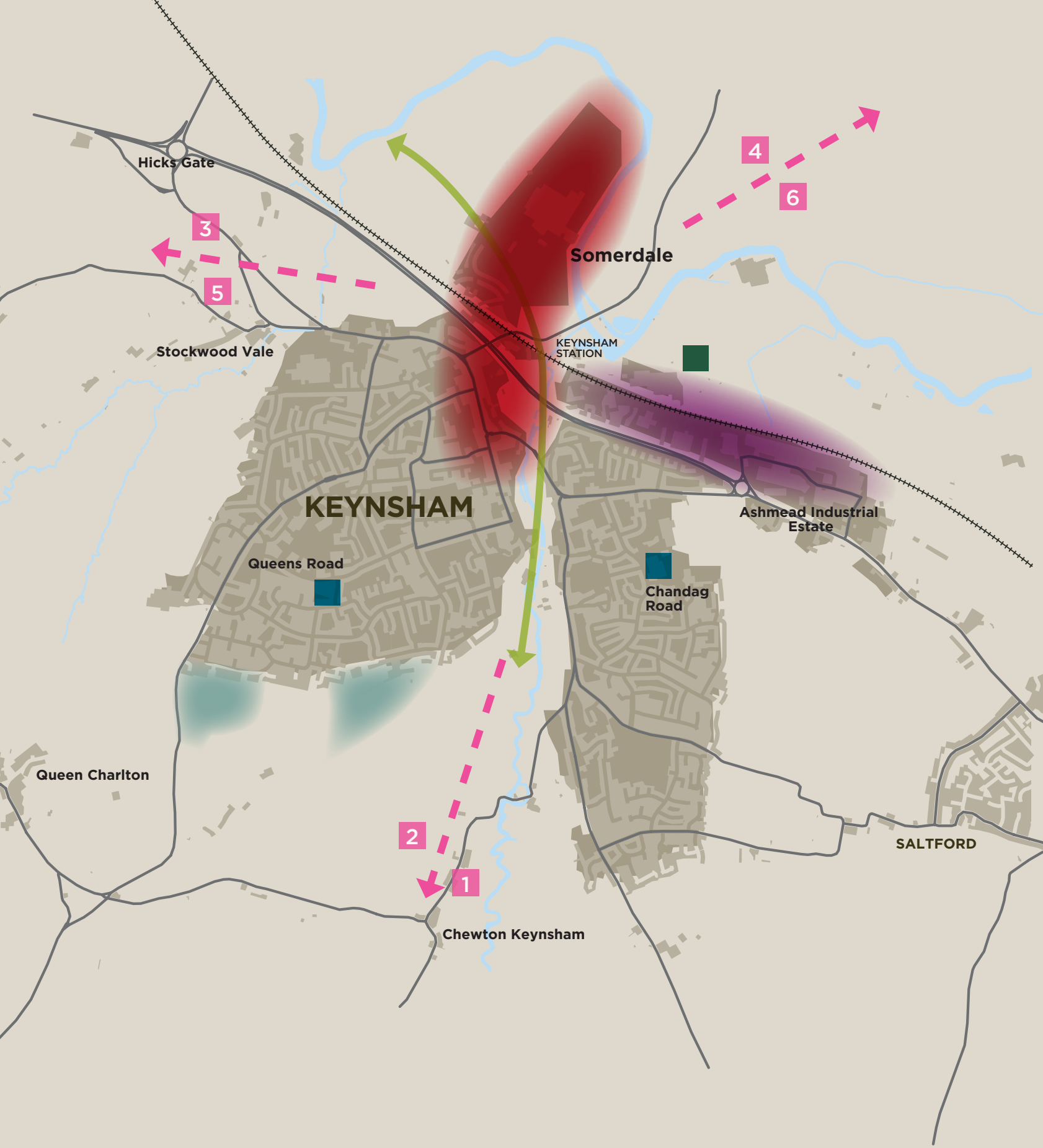
The Vision from the Core Strategy for Keynsham is as follows:

The Vision

What the spatial strategy seeks to achieve

Keynsham is a historic town that occupies a strategically important location between Bristol and Bath and is therefore well placed to improve and attract investment. It will continue to act as a market town and service centre for the surrounding area. In responding to the loss of a major employer, it will evolve as a more significant business location. Keynsham will expand to accommodate a growing population, ensuring it retains its independence and its separate identity within an attractive rural setting. It will become a more sustainable, desirable and well-connected place in which to live and work, with an enhanced town centre inspired by its heritage, cherished rivers, park and green spaces.





River Corridor
Key GI Asset

KEYNSHAM SPATIAL STRATEGY

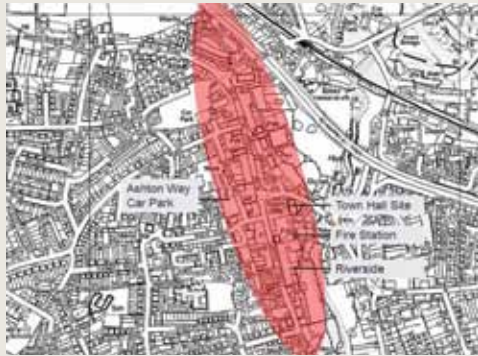
KEY

- Town Centre/ Somerdale Policy Area
- Core Business Area
- New Neighbourhood at South West Keynsham (Local Plan Policy K2)
- - - ➔ Cycle & Walking Links
- 1 Regional Cycle Route 10
- 2 2 Rivers Walking Route
- 3 National Cycle Route 3
- 4 National Cycle Route 4
- 5 River Avon Trail Walking Route
- 6 Monarch's Way Walking Route
- ↔ Green Infrastructure Link
- Proposed Waste Facility
- Local Centre

Development Sites

Keynsham

SK1 Town Centre



The Core Strategy says that change within the town centre will be managed to improve Keynsham's performance and profile as:

- a An important and attractive retail centre, market town and service centre for the surrounding area, inspired by its character and heritage;
- b A more significant business location, encouraging enterprise, creativity and innovation; and
- c A more sustainable, desirable and well-connected place in which to live and work.

Core Strategy Policy KE2 sets out the scope and scale of change, and establishes a series of placemaking principles for the town centre. Adding the necessary detail to these principles will be the key areas requiring debate and discussion with the community represented by the Town Council and other community and stakeholder groups.

- How can the Core Strategy aspirations and the development aspects of the Town Plan best be achieved?
- What are the appropriate policy instruments to enable the vision for the High Street to be achieved?
- How can the Placemaking Plan provide the policy context that enables the delivery of larger retail units that might encourage a greater diversity of national retailers, whilst safeguarding smaller premises that tend to be more suitable for independent retailers?
- How can the success of the Keynsham Town Hall development as a low carbon exemplar be built upon?
- How can this be delivered alongside the need to safeguard the historic qualities and character, as well as the fine grain, of the High Street?
- How restrictive does the policy need to be to safeguard retail uses, and how permissive to encourage changes to use to complementary uses?
- The existing off-street parking stock within the town is currently well used and this level is likely to be required in the future. What measures may need to be brought forward to manage increased traffic, particularly through the town centre?

SK2 Somerdale



Policy KE2 from the Core Strategy seeks:

'A new high quality, exemplar, mixed-use quarter at Somerdale, providing significant employment floorspace, new homes, leisure, open space, sport and recreational uses, and that the sequential and exception tests for flood risk would have to be met to justify any dwellings in higher risk parts of the site'.

The planning application discussions for the redevelopment of this site by Taylor Wimpey are at an advanced stage, and it is likely and indeed hopeful, that this will be resolved before the Placemaking Plan is at a stage to have much influence.

However, it is not a foregone conclusion, and there may be a need for more detailed and specific planning policies for the development of the Somerdale site, or is there a sufficient planning policy framework in place already?

The map above shows the site as allocated in the Local Plan. The dotted line indicates the site's wider context where Green Belt policy will apply to any development proposals.

Development Sites

Keynsham

SK3 Ashton Way Car Park



This area has potential for town centre uses to complement the existing offer of the Town Centre.

- What other uses could be permitted that complement the town centre?
- How should planning policies be framed to ensure that wider aspirations for the area are achieved?
- How should this area best connect into its surrounding context, in particular to the High Street, and to Keynsham Railway Station?
- How should the design of development physically relate to its surrounding context?
- What mix of uses would be acceptable in this area, including the levels of car parking that should be retained?

SK4 Riverside and Fire Station



- Do the Core Strategy Policies KE1 and KE2 provide enough detail for any potential redevelopment, including changes of use, for the Riverside complex?
- What scope is there for the introduction of a range of mixed uses within this area, including residential?
- How should any redevelopment relate to the park, and the Town Hall redevelopment that is currently underway?

SK5 Broadmead / Ashmead / Pixash Industrial Estate



Identified as an area for business activity in the Core Strategy, the aspiration for this area is to retain its core function as an area for business activity, to enable its intensification through higher density business development and to complement the role of the Town Centre. This is reinforced by Policy KE3 that seeks an expansion of this area as an integrated part of the new housing area to the east of Keynsham.

- What planning policies need to be in place to ensure that this aspiration is achieved?
- What degree of protection, if any, should be given to the different use classes within this area, e.g. offices (B1), industrial uses (B2) or warehousing and distribution (B8)?
- How can this area be used to promote the low carbon economy?
- How can planning policies positively support its intensification or expansion, whilst protecting valued assets?
- How can development in this area be better managed to complement the town centre?
- What opportunities are there for this area to be better integrated or made more accessible to the local residential population?

Development Sites

Development on the edge of Keynsham

SK6

Keynsham – land adjoining east and south west Keynsham

The Core Strategy states that land should be removed from the Green Belt in order to provide for 250 homes, employment development and associated infrastructure adjoining east Keynsham and 200 homes and associated infrastructure adjoining south west Keynsham. The Core Strategy also outlines the planning requirements for development (through Policies KE3 and KE4 respectively).

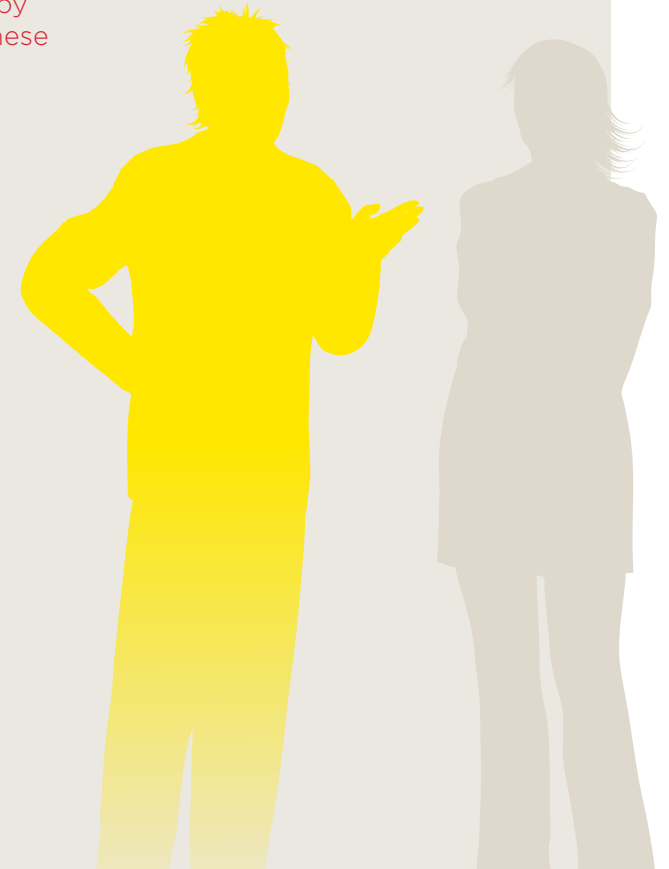
Subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination the Placemaking Plan will identify and allocate the precise sites for development within these broad locations; define a revised detailed Green Belt boundary; and, as necessary, set out more detailed development requirements.

As the Core Strategy is still at Examination and the Inspector has not yet confirmed the way forward regarding development in these locations, the Launch Document does not raise questions in respect of development and comments are not sought at this stage. However, dependent on the outcome of the Examination the Council will undertake the work referred to above with the close involvement of the neighbouring communities. The preferred site and detailed Green Belt boundary options, as well as the options considered but rejected, will be presented for public consultation during the next stage of preparation.

SK7

Local Centres (Chandag and Queens Road)

- What additional planning policies are required to enhance these areas?
- How can their retail function be strengthened, and how can their role as centres for the local community be improved?
- What opportunities do nearby developments provide for these local centres?



Somer Valley



Introduction

The overarching planning policy context for development in the Somer Valley has been set out clearly in the Council's Core Strategy. This was informed by the 'Brighter Futures Community Plan' produced by the Somer Valley Partnership, and by the 'Future for the Somer Valley' vision. These provide the aspiration and policy context for the Placemaking Plan to add further detail, and create the conditions for positive change.

The process of producing the Placemaking Plan will focus on targeted collaborative working and bottom up planning with the local stakeholder and community groups, including the Somer Valley Partnership and the Town and Parish Councils.

The Vision from the Core Strategy for the Somer Valley is as follows:

The Vision

What the spatial strategy seeks to achieve

The southern part of the District will become more self-reliant, facilitated by economic-led revitalisation alongside local energy generation, building on its industrial expertise and improving skill levels. Transport connections to other centres, as well as connections between settlements within the Somer Valley area will continue to be improved.

The roles of Midsomer Norton and Radstock Town Centres will be complementary, providing key employment opportunities, services and leisure provision to the communities in the Somer Valley area. Midsomer Norton town centre will continue to be the principal centre with an improved public realm and enhanced townscape and a Town Park. Radstock will continue to provide a focal point for local communities and realise its potential for tourism based on its green infrastructure, mining heritage, cycle ways and attractive rural hinterland. Villages of the Somer Valley will continue to provide for the needs of their local communities.





**KEY SITES IN THE
SETTLEMENTS WITHIN
THE SOMER VALLEY**

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Development Sites

Somer Valley

SSV1

Midsomer Norton Town Centre Sites



- What changes should take place to ensure that the High Street maintains its vitality and viability? Are there any environmental improvements that will make the Town Centre a more attractive for shopping and recreation?
- How should the aspirations for the High Street be delivered?
- How restrictive does the policy need to be to safeguard retail uses, and how permissive to encourage changes to use to complementary uses?
- What other assets of the Town Centre need to be recognised and protected?
- How can these assets help to reinforce the image and identity of the place?

SSV2

Midsomer Norton – South Road Car Park



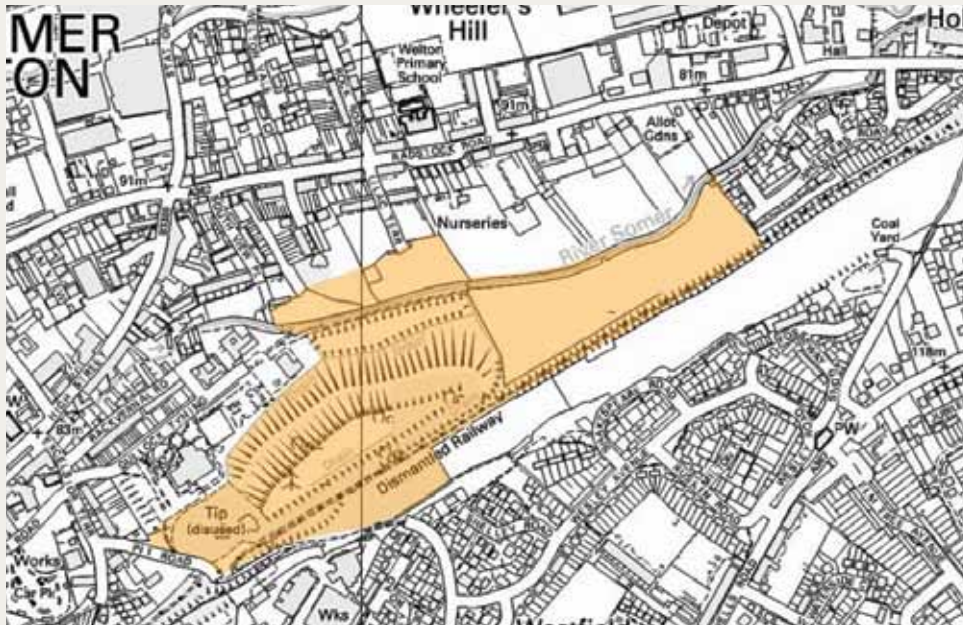
- The Council aspires to redevelop this site for a convenience foodstore with parking in order to strengthen and reinforce the retail role and function of the High Street. A current proposal is being actively pursued, and its progress will need to be reflected in the collaborative approach undertaken for this document.
- What other uses should be promoted or encouraged in this area?
 - How can this site best be integrated into the High Street area, and how can access for surrounding communities best be improved?
 - What are the energy opportunities and requirements?
 - What levels of public car parking needs to be retained on site, and how should this best be managed?
 - What planning policies are required to ensure that development of this site complements and enhances the vitality and viability of the High Street?

Development Sites

Somer Valley

SSV3

Midsomer Norton – Town Park



- What should the vision be for the town park? What kind of place should be created, and what is its role and function for the immediate and the wider community?
- Are there other uses that need to be permitted to help enable the project to be delivered?
- What opportunities are there for enhancing green infrastructure connections to the area?
- How can access, in particular pedestrian and cycle routes, be improved to ensure that this becomes a valuable and popular recreational facility serving the wider community of the Somer Valley?
- What opportunities are there for enhancing the biodiversity value of the area?

SSV4

Midsomer Norton – Welton Packaging Factory



- The site is allocated in the Local Plan for mixed use residential and business uses, to include about 100 dwellings and provision for public rights of way within the site.
- What would be the opportunities and requirements for low carbon industry here?
 - What green infrastructure opportunities are there?
 - How can this site be designed to improve access, in particular pedestrian and cycle routes, for the wider community of the Somer Valley?
 - What is the vision for this site and how can the Placemaking Plan help to ensure it is delivered?
 - What mix of uses should be allowed on this site as part of a comprehensive scheme and to enable delivery of employment uses?
 - Should the site also continue to have an employment role?

Development Sites

Somer Valley

SSV5

Radstock Town Centre Sites



- What are the appropriate policy instruments to enable the vision for this area to be achieved? How restrictive does the policy need to be to safeguard retail uses, and how permissive to encourage changes to use to complementary uses?
- How should the aspirations be delivered?
- What assets, over and above those identified in the Core Strategy, need to be recognised and protected?
- How can these assets help to reinforce the image and identity of the place?

SSV6

Radstock – Coombend



Issues

- This is a complex part of the town with different uses cheek-by-jowl, sometimes incompatibly. In places there is a degraded environment. There are a number of redevelopment opportunities which could bring environmental improvements that could be made, whilst recognising the valuable employment opportunities that the area provides. What should the long term role of this area play within the town?
- What changes are desirable and how important is it to safeguard the existing employment opportunities of the area?
- Are there opportunities to introduce other uses such as residential?
- How can environmental improvements be secured?

SSV7

Additional Housing in the settlements within the Somer Valley

The Core Strategy identifies the Somer Valley as accommodating an additional 300 homes over and above existing identified supply (including committed sites, major brownfield sites and windfall sites). Whilst the focus for change will be in the town centres, on vacant and under-used sites, some development on new locations will be required to meet housing needs.

- Which settlements provide the best opportunities for additional development in line with the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy?
- What are the valued assets and characteristics of place that need to be protected, or used to influence new developments?

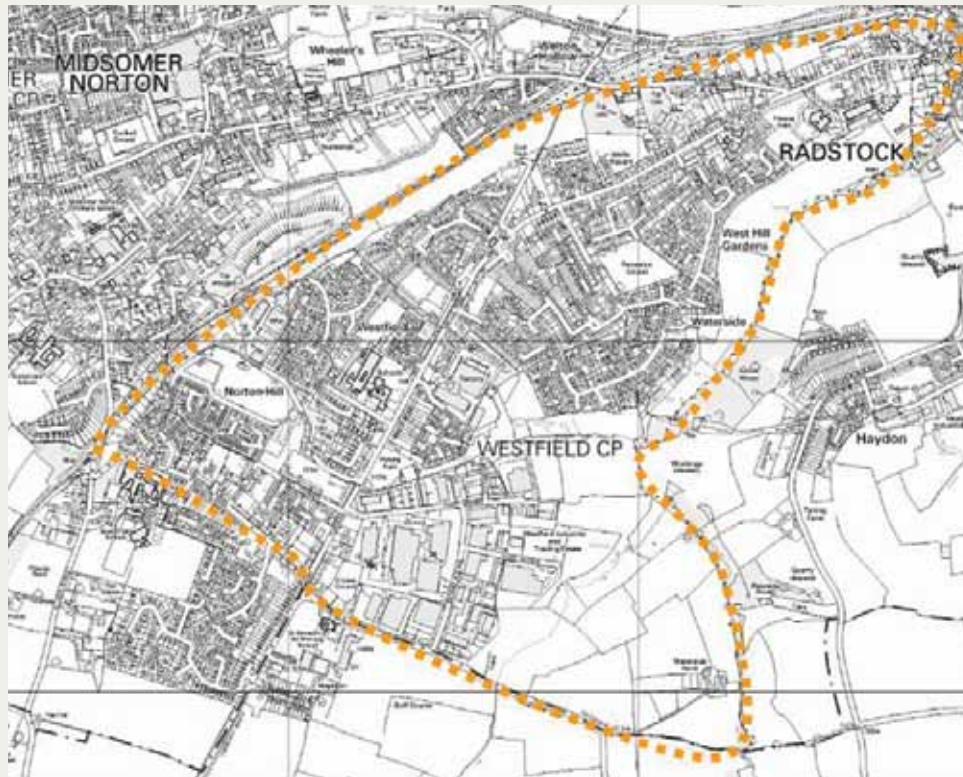
- How should the housing development boundaries in Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton and Peasedown St John best be amended to accommodate this?
- Which sites should be allocated to meet this additional housing need?
- What are the design and planning requirements needed for each of the sites?
- What are the infrastructure requirements for each of the sites?



Development Sites

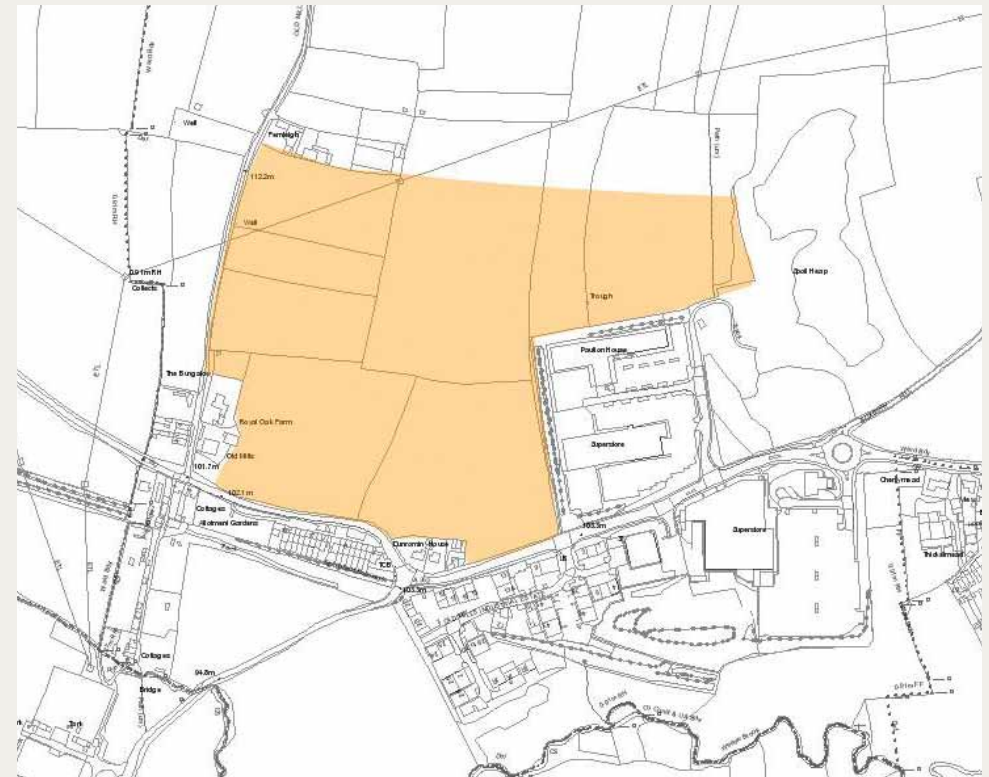
Somer Valley

SSV8 Westfield



- How can the local centre best be enhanced, and what policy framework is required to do this?
 - Is there a need for more site specific policies to manage change within the existing employment areas?
 - How can access, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, best be improved to local facilities?
 - What local infrastructure requirements can be identified, and what are the options for ensuring that these can be delivered?
- The dotted line on the map indicates the boundary of Westfield Parish.

SSV9 Paulton - Old Mills



- What is the vision for this area and how can the Placemaking Plan help to ensure it is delivered?
- How can employment best be secured?
- Should a mix of uses be allowed on this site as part of a comprehensive scheme and to enable its delivery?
- What opportunities are there for renewable energy?

Rural Areas



Introduction

The diversity of the rural areas of Bath and North East Somerset is recognised by the overarching policy framework provided by the Core Strategy. The task of the Placemaking Plan, particularly through the process of continuing the targeted collaborative work with the local communities and the Parish Councils, is to reveal this diversity in more detail, to better understand the aspirations of different places, explore their potential, identify development opportunities, and to understand the appetite for change.

The approach of the Placemaking Plan will need to be tailored to the different types of settlement throughout the rural areas, although there will be universal placemaking principles that will apply to all settlements. However, it is also essential to recognise that the Council has limited resources and must focus these in those areas with the most significant levels of change. The approach that the Council will take with those rural areas of little change will be very much a light touch, limited to the provision of templates and proformas as detailed below. For those areas with more significant levels of change, the RA1 and RA2 villages in particular, the Council will seek to be more proactive.

The collaborative work on the Placemaking Plan began with a workshop with the Parish Councils at the beginning of February 2013. This event identified the support for the Placemaking Plan approach, and the willingness of most of the Parish Councils to work together to achieve these aims. It is therefore proposed to:

- Hold joint workshops and training exercises with those Parish Councils that share similar development pressures, characteristics or geographic identity;
- Encourage clustering of Parish Councils for the purposes of contributing to the content of the Placemaking Plan; and
- Provide a consistent Placemaking Plan 'proforma' and questionnaire that can help with the generation of an appropriate evidence base.



KEY

- Green Belt
- Built Up Areas

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Development Sites

Rural Areas

RURAL 1 Rural Areas

Within the rural areas the Core Strategy seeks to focus additional housing development on the more sustainable villages with a range of key services and facilities. The amount of additional housing to be accommodated in villages is still subject to consideration at the Examination.

However, assuming that the approach set out is agreed the Core Strategy states that those villages in the rural areas that meet the criteria of Policy RA1 should each make provision for around 50 dwellings during the plan period. To complement this approach, some limited residential development of around 15 dwellings will be encouraged in villages meeting the Policy RA2 criteria, in those villages located outside the Green Belt and having a housing development boundary (HDB). For most villages this will require a review of the HDBs.

The Placemaking Plan will assess and identify the most suitable development opportunities in these villages. Such development should seek to support local services and facilities that are important to the vitality of village life and for meeting every day needs. In addition to identifying the most suitable opportunities for new development the Placemaking Plan will also consider whether there are particular assets e.g. valued open space that should be identified and protected.

The Council will be working collaboratively with local communities and Parish Councils to address these issues in the villages meeting the criteria in Policies RA1 and RA2.

- What are the valued assets within each community? How can these best be protected, and what is the evidence base for protecting them?
- What development opportunities are there to:
 - Meet future and current housing needs, particularly affordable housing?
 - Support and provide new schools, local services and facilities?
 - Provide local employment opportunities?
 - Reduce reliance on private transport?
 - Improve Broadband speed and communications?
- How should Housing Development Boundaries be reviewed? Are they still an important policy tool or are there different approaches that could achieve the aspirations of the Core Strategy and local communities?
- Do different settlements functionally relate to each other and are there in benefits in identifying relationships?

- What infrastructure improvements could be made? And how can these be delivered?
- What are the sustainable energy, carbon reduction, food growing and climate change adaptation opportunities and requirements?
- Small scale employment development may also be appropriate in the RA1 villages and the Placemaking Plan will consider the need to allocate particular sites. How should such sites be allocated, and what planning requirements should be put in place?



Development Sites

Rural Areas

RURAL 2

Additional housing development on the edge of Bristol at Whitchurch

The Core Strategy states that land should be removed from the Green Belt in order to provide for 200 homes and associated infrastructure on the edge of Bristol at Whitchurch. The Core Strategy also outlines the planning requirements for development (through Policy RA5). Dependent on the outcome of the issues referred to below the Placemaking Plan will identify and allocate the precise site(s) for development within this broad location; define a revised detailed Green Belt boundary; and, as necessary, set out more detailed development requirements.

The Core Strategy is still at Examination and therefore, the Inspector has not yet confirmed the way forward regarding development in this location. In addition, there are current planning applications for development in the Green Belt at Whitchurch (on land to the north of Staunton Lane and at Horseworld). Both these applications would need to demonstrate very special circumstances in relation to Green Belt policy.

If they are approved, either by Bath and North East Somerset Council, or on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate, then, within the context of the Core Strategy, the Placemaking Plan will not need to allocate additional land for housing as the need for more housing in this area would have been met. This is likely to unfold during the production of the Placemaking Plan.

As a result the Launch Document does not raise questions in respect of development and comments are not sought at this stage. However, if site allocation and definition of a revised detailed Green Belt boundary does need to be undertaken through the Placemaking Plan the Council will undertake this work with the close involvement of the neighbouring communities. The preferred site and detailed Green Belt boundary options, as well as the options considered but rejected, would then be presented for public consultation during the next stage of preparation.



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Introduction

Key to delivering a high quality environment is putting in place a more detailed planning policy framework which will build on the policy themes set out in the Core Strategy. This discussion document provides the opportunity to start the process of developing other **positive and proactive development management policies** to help deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy and to respond positively to changes in national planning policy (NPPF). This is also the chance to review the adopted Local Plan policies some of which are becoming out of date and to consider if any new policies needed.

Once developed these policies will be used to assess and determine planning applications and will apply district-wide. They will also need to complement and be reflected in the site specific policies. The NPPF makes it clear that 'only policies that provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal should be included in the plan.'

The following section sets out what the Council thinks the broad scope of the planning policy framework might be which will be used as the starting point for discussions with the aim of drawing up options for a comprehensive range of Development Management policies for the next stage in the plan-making process.



These are the suggested topic areas for the planning policy framework:

- Responding to climate change
- Sustainable design
- Employment
- Retail and town centres
- Housing issues
- Meeting community and recreational needs
- Green Belt
- Green Infrastructure
- Landscape
- Biodiversity and the natural environment
- Historic environment
- Sustainable transport
- Minerals
- Pollution, health and safety

It is recognised that there are strong links between some of these topic areas with each other and with the site specific policy requirements which will need to be articulated clearly during the development of the Placemaking Plan policy framework at the next stage.

Responding to climate change

Context

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This is echoed in the Core Strategy, which contains the cross cutting objective to pursue a low carbon and sustainable future in a changing climate. Below are suggested approaches to adding detail to the climate change policies in the Core Strategy to enable the aims to be met.



Some overarching principles

Sustainable Construction

- The Core Strategy Policy CP2 sets district-wide sustainable construction standards by requiring certain levels of the full Code for Sustainable Homes to be met. However, specific sites may be able to meet a higher level of the code for sustainable construction and evidence is being gathered to investigate the viability of requirements for higher levels of Code on specific sites. This will form the basis for site-specific standards to be set in the Placemaking Plan.

Renewable Energy

- More detailed policy may be needed to facilitate delivery of the renewable energy targets in Core Policy CP3. The Bath & North East Somerset Clean Energy Strategy, currently under development, will lay out in more detail how these targets can be met and set year on year targets and it could be investigated to see how the planning implications of this Strategy could be included in the Placemaking Plan. The NPPF also suggests local planning authorities help support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

Climate Change Adaptation

- Flooding in recent years has had severe impacts on the district and caused loss of life. Climate change is likely to increase the incidence of flooding, but also other types of severe weather such as heatwaves, cold, storms and drought. Development will need to be resilient to the future climate.

Food

- Studies show that climate change may be very disruptive to our global food systems. To be resilient to these changes will mean developing a robust and diverse food system, including local food provision which will also support the rural economy and reduce carbon emissions associated with food transport. A Food Strategy is under development and a growing body of policy and practice can be drawn upon to develop a planning framework that supports sustainable local food production, including but not limited to the points below:
 - Requirement for developments to provide facilities for community and individual gardening and allotments.
 - Requirement for developments to incorporate “edible landscapes” as part of approach to Green Infrastructure
 - Enabling food processing
 - Protection of high grade agricultural land

DP1

Discussion points

- Bearing in mind what the NPPF says about only including policies which give clear guidance to the decision maker when considering development proposals, how do you think any further climate change related policies should be framed?
- How can the planning system support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy?
- What types of measures should be included to enable development to be resilient to the future climate?
- How can the production, processing, distribution and retail of local food best be supported?
- Are more precise boundaries needed for the District Heating Priority Areas?
- Should areas be identified for renewable energy projects?

Development Management Policies

Responding to climate change continued

Allotments and local food production

Allotments are not only an important leisure resource but also should be recognised for their value as open spaces especially in urban areas, for their contribution to sustainable development objectives, Green Infrastructure networks, local food production, biodiversity, healthy living, community development and their potential for educational opportunities.

Land in existing allotment loss is currently safeguarded from development unless alternative equivalent provision can be made. The policy also encourages provision of new allotments to replace those lost through development where there is demand and so provides advice in the local context.

There is currently no local planning policy relating to agricultural land and the Council has relied on the detailed guidance in now superseded national policy. The NPPF now simply states that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

DP2

Discussion points

- Should a policy that safeguards against the loss of allotment land and seeks the provision of new allotments be included in the Placemaking Plan?
- As agricultural land is one the district's most important resources, in terms of promoting local food production, should there be a policy that safeguarded the best and most versatile agricultural land from development?

Securing sustainable design

Context

National guidance wants Local Plans to set out a robust and comprehensive policy framework in order to guide development. It should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally. It also suggests that local authorities consider use of design codes. The importance which Government attaches to the design of the built environment is stressed in the NPPF "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

Some overarching principles

- Expect highest standards of design (urban form, building, spaces and landscape) and well connected, accessible environments by incorporating sustainable design principles
- Ensure the built and natural environments are well linked and are safe and cohesive
- Make sure all opportunities are taken to enhance local distinctiveness
- Encourage buildings capable of adaptation and multi-use
- Need to design out antisocial behaviour, crime and reduce the fear of crime
- Design to promote healthier lifestyles and for people to be active outside their homes and places of work
- Ensure all site-specific opportunities to deliver low carbon, climate adapted development are taken in order to meet the aims in the Core Strategy.

Securing sustainable design continued

We already have Core Strategy Policy CP6, a high level policy for Environmental Quality, and supporting text which stresses the importance of achieving high quality design in Bath & North East Somerset and makes reference to the impact this can have on quality of life by making better places for people to live in, enjoy, work and visit.

Well-designed places have fundamental and far reaching benefits not least improvements in physical and mental health and general well-being. Although there is a raft of detailed design advice at national level, in view of the importance of this issue for Bath & East Somerset, it is essential to develop a policy framework that is specific to this district. The Core Strategy requires Building for Life assessment methodology is used to ensure well-designed homes and neighbourhoods are secured. Now linked to the NPPF, the aim of the recent Building for Life 12 is to stimulate 'a conversation between local communities, local authorities and developers about creating great places to live'. The Council's recently adopted Sustainable Construction and Retrofitting SPD is also essential to the debate.

DP3

Discussion points

We need to decide what the key factors in securing sustainable design should be. These are some ideas for what the policy framework could cover: What are your views on this?

- Design to promote healthier lifestyles and for people to be active outside their homes and places of work
- Require high quality design for all new development regardless of size, mass and scale
- Layout and design to be based on a clear understanding and evaluation of the site and its wider context (aesthetic, cultural, social, historic etc.)
- Respond positively to the locality in terms of mass, scale, building form and heights, plot size and materials
- Design, orientation and layout of development should seek to minimise energy consumption, enable the use of renewable energy and be adapted to the future climate (e.g. heat, storm and flood proof).
- Provision is made for the separation and storage of waste for collection and for composting
- Conserve and where possible enhance the historic assets and landscapes and natural features
- Establish a strong sense of place and enhance local distinctiveness
- External lighting not to give rise to unacceptable levels of illumination spillage
- Sensitively designed signage and advertisement taking account of local setting
- Create safe, accessible, legible environments
- Maximum natural surveillance
- Flexible and robust buildings, capable of adaptation and/or multi-use over their lifetime
- Contribution of landscape features in the site/proposal to biodiversity/ecological corridors (support wildlife)
- Create links to green infrastructure network – encourage activity
- Create new and enhance existing pedestrian/cycle links
- Proposal is not overbearing or dominating to safeguard amenity
- Masterplans and design codes required for all major developments
- Public art supported for all major development proposals

Employment

Context

Sustainable growth is one of Government's top priorities for increase in economic productivity and creation of jobs. This is reflected throughout the Core Strategy place-based sections and articulated in Strategic Objective 3 which seeks to encourage economic development, diversity and prosperity. Core Strategy Section 6e A Prosperous Economy commits the Placemaking Plan to identifying and allocating sites to meet employment space requirements. In order for the Placemaking Plan to be consistent with national planning policy, a more flexible approach to employment and economic development will need to be considered. The NPPF asks that local planning authorities identify 'priority areas' and to review employment land allocations.

Core Strategy aims to deliver parts of the B&NES Economic Strategy:

- A more diverse local economy which offers a greater choice of jobs and which has enhanced its economic resilience whilst retaining its distinctiveness;
- An increase in the economic output of the Bath and North East Somerset economy by facilitating growth in higher-waged, knowledge-based sectors;
- A place where knowledge-based workers (including graduates) can find jobs and where the innovation being developed at our leading education providers can grow commercially;
- A socially inclusive economy with a focus on lifelong learning, increased workforce skills, and continued high levels of economic participation;
- A more sustainable economy with increased local employment, less overall commuting and a reduction in the contribution made by commerce and industry to the carbon footprint of the area.

Some overarching principles

- Make sure there is sufficient land available for meeting employment land requirements
- Identify priority employment areas and safeguard employment sites to developing a prosperous economy and identify other sites to ensure delivery of balanced economic growth
- Re-use brownfield sites before greenfield sites and take advantage of regeneration opportunities which could offer high quality employment
- Boosting a sustainable rural economy
- Identify the broad distribution of employment development across the District
- Promote and support development of the knowledge driven economy as well as innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurial activity
- Support the diversification of the economy and focus growth in rural businesses in the most sustainable accessible locations
- Promote and support the low carbon goods and services sector, one of the few sectors to exhibit robust growth in recent years

The Placemaking Plan also has a key role in implementing the objectives of the Core Strategy and the Economic Strategy principally through the site specific policies.

DP4 Discussion points

- Should the Placemaking Plan include a policy (policies) which seeks to safeguard employment land from other uses or should a more flexible approach be adopted?
- In the context of the Economic Strategy what planning policy criteria should be used to encourage local and inward investment to meet anticipated needs?
- What types of premises are required to meet the long-term needs of the current and future workforce in a changing economy?
- How should live/work units be encouraged or facilitated? Should this be a requirement of site specific policies in certain locations?
- National planning policy states that local planning authorities should plan positively for locating, promoting networks/clusters of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries. What type of policy framework could best achieve this?



Development Management Policies

Employment continued

Development in the Rural Areas

Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2 allow small-scale employment development at villages outside the Green Belt within and adjoining the Housing Development Boundary providing it is of an appropriate scale, character and appearance.

The Core Strategy encourages the creation of new and retention of existing rural businesses to underpin economic sustainability especially through the reuse and conversion of redundant or underused buildings. The reuse or adaptation of buildings in the countryside is particularly important in the changing structure of the rural economy and assist with farm diversification for food processing, commercial, leisure and tourism uses. Enabling value to be added to locally-grown food through the building of processing facilities is key to the rural economy and to realising the benefits of local, sustainable food.

There are a number of saved Local Plan policies that could be reviewed and taken forward in the Placemaking Plan to provide a firm policy framework for dealing with proposals which sustain and promote the rural economy and complement Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2. These include:

- Policy ET.5 which allows proposals for new employment development outside settlements and not in the Green Belt and is consistent with the NPPF in supporting economic growth and creating jobs in rural areas.
- Policy ET.8 which relates to farm diversification and on which the Core Strategy is reliant on and is generally consistent with the NPPF which promotes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses but provides no further detailed guidance.
- Policy ET.9 which deals with the re-use of rural buildings. The Core Strategy stresses the importance of re-using rural buildings and the important role it has in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial and industrial development, as well as for tourism, sport and recreation.
- Policy HG.10, Replacement dwellings in the countryside, which sets out criteria for considering proposals for replacing or rebuilding existing dwellings in the countryside where there is normally a presumption against new dwellings.

DP5

Discussion points

- Do you think it is useful to continue to have a policy framework which provides appropriate criteria for considering new employment development proposals in countryside?
- Should there be protection against the loss of existing rural employment uses?
- What types of employment should we be encouraging in the countryside, for instance, office, industry, food processing or storage uses?
- Do you believe it is important to take forward a policy framework which supports farm diversification, which will continue to be a factor in the rural economy? Should this policy be expanded to include other uses, and also sustainable energy production?
- Should there continue to be a planning policy framework to guide the re-use of rural buildings in the open countryside?
- Is it important to have separate guidelines for re-use of rural buildings for employment purposes and for residential purposes?
- What do you think about having a separate policy relating to dwellings in the countryside and should the policy framework relate all types of buildings?



Town Centre Uses

Retailing is still an essential part of the function of Bath, the towns and many of the larger villages in the district. Bath city centre continues to be a major shopping destination. Retail activity is primarily focussed in the central shopping area, which lies within the wider city centre. It serves the convenience and comparison shopping needs of the local population as well as being a regional retail and leisure centres. The town centres in Keynsham, Radstock and Midsomer Norton serve the day to day shopping needs of local residents and those of the surrounding rural areas.

Some overarching principles

- Support the vitality and viability of town and other local centres by:
 - protecting primary shopping areas and primary shopping frontages where they maintain the vitality and viability of town and other local centres
 - providing for a vibrant mix of town centre uses, including retail, cultural facilities, offices, other employment, community and housing
 - ensuring the scale and type of new retail development is acceptable/consistent with the retail, function of the centres
- Maintain and improve the provision of accessible local services and community services with the emphasis on meeting local needs locally

Primary Shopping Frontages

'Primary Frontages' are currently defined providing a concentration of retail (A1 uses) in the central part of Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock, targeting specific areas of town. The purpose of these is to maintain attractiveness of these centres as accessible shopping destinations and to contribute to the vitality and viability of these centres. The current policy approach allows for some complementary non-A1 uses such as cafes, restaurants and other food and drink outlets and for financial services (e.g. banks/building societies) to complement the function of the area without compromising either the retail function of the area or amenity of neighbouring occupants.

Local Centres

It is important retail areas are protected and enhanced by positive planning policies in order to safeguard their integrity yet allow for flexibility and diversity. Core Strategy Policy CP12 'Centres and Retailing' together with the specific placed-based policies for Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock, establishes the shopping hierarchy and sets the framework for new town centre uses for the Placemaking Plan taking a sequential approach.

This approach reflects the change of emphasis in national planning policy from focussing on retail to planning for a diverse range of town centre uses. This is seen as key to maintaining vitality and viability and meeting the needs of local catchment areas as well as reducing the need to travel.



Town Centre
Uses continued

Housing Issues

DP6

Discussion points

- Bearing in mind the current roles the city and town centres play within and beyond Bath and North East Somerset, is there a case for allowing more flexibility in certain centres to allow opportunities for growth?
- Does the current approach to controlling changes of use in primary shopping frontages continue to be appropriate?
- Would it be more effective to retain current restrictive policy but reduce the number of properties protected or make the policy more flexible and maintain existing frontage protection?
- The boundaries of the shopping centres are currently defined on the Policies Map to provide clarity on where retail development would be acceptable. Although this will be part of the discussion within the place-based section of the Placemaking Plan, do you agree with the principle of retaining clearly defined shopping centres?

The core Strategy sets out the context for housing development across the district by proposing the overall number of homes to be planned for, the approach to affordable housing and providing sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and the broad approach to achieving housing mix. Other housing related issues which perhaps need more detailed guidance and debate will be considered through the Placemaking Plan. These principally relate to the review of Housing Development Boundaries, housing density and addressing other specific housing needs not already covered by the Core Strategy.

Some overarching principles

- Direct housing to the most sustainable locations
- Make the most efficient use of land
- Ensure the specific accommodation needs of older people and other special needs groups are addressed

Housing Development Boundaries

Housing Development Boundaries (HDBs) have been defined in the Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan around settlements to indicate those areas where residential development would be acceptable in principle. These are currently drawn tightly around the existing built up area of a settlement as shown on the Policies Map.

Preparation of the Placemaking Plan provides an opportunity to review HDBs for the towns and the larger more sustainable villages which accord with the Core Strategy Policy RA1 or RA2 requirements in order to allow for some limited expansion where appropriate. This will involve close working with the Parish and Town Council to establish where there is scope to amend the boundaries and allow land to be allocated.

Housing Density

National planning policy now encourages local authorities to set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances. In Bath & North East Somerset the issue of residential density is an important consideration in securing good design, respecting local character and making the most efficient use of land.



Housing Issues continued

The Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan currently promotes a district-wide policy which sets out minimum density for residential development in line with previous national planning policy, and expects densities over 30 dwellings per hectare to maximise the use of housing sites and encourages densities over 50 dwellings per hectare in appropriate, well accessed, locations.

Design policies are also key in determining the appropriate density for a site. Other relevant factors include reduction in household size, proximity of local services and public transport, impact on viability and the delivery of affordable housing. There will need to be clear links between any district-wide or area-based approach to density and the site specific policies.

DP7

Discussion points

- Do you think the Council should continue the current policy of expecting densities of a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare and a minimum of 50 dwellings in appropriate locations?
- Instead of specifying a minimum density thresholds should a policy approach be adopted which expects housing density on new development sites to reflect local context and distinctiveness?

Other specific housing need

The Core Strategy states that the specific accommodation needs of older people will be addressed through the Placemaking Plan, including considering the allocation of appropriate sites. There are also saved Local Plan policies that could potentially be taken forward in a revised form to ensure other known areas of housing need are met such as the sub-division of housing (Policy HG.12). National planning policy stresses the importance of delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.

DP8

Discussion points

- What particular matters need to be addressed to ensure the specific accommodation needs of other special needs groups are addressed?
- Are there any other issues relating to meeting housing needs that should be addressed through a more detailed local planning policy?

Meeting Local Community and Recreational Needs

Context

The Core Strategy seeks to ensure that adequate and accessible provision is made for the recreation, leisure and cultural needs for both existing and future communities in Bath and North East Somerset. It stresses that 'successful community facilities and services will be integral to the vibrancy of communities across the district'. It makes the link between the providing good community facilities and opportunities for people to meet and integrate, to get involved in activities and increased access to services.

National planning policy promotes the retention and development of local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship amongst social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that are necessary to sustain community needs and support healthy lifestyles. The adopted Local Plan also includes youth centres, education facilities at schools and colleges, health care provided at hospitals, clinics and surgeries, libraries, and venues for community arts within the scope of community facilities.

The Council's emerging Leisure Strategy will be key in informing the development of this part of the Placemaking Plan.

Some overarching principles

- Promote healthy lifestyles through encouraging the appropriate location outdoor and indoor facilities
- Safeguard against the loss of community and sports facilities, unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer needed by the community they serve and are not needed for any other community or recreational use
- Encourage participation in community, and cultural facilities by ensuring that these are well-located and accessible
- Encourage flexible use of community and recreational facilities and venues and co-location of services

Development Management Policies

Meeting Local Community and Recreational Needs continued

DP9

Discussion points

- What type of policy framework needs to be put in place in order to address the principles outlined above? What should it include?
 - What types of community and recreational facilities are important to be safeguarded?
 - Should the loss of a public house only be accepted if it is no longer economically viable or there is locally accessible alternative provision?
 - Should we continue to safeguard land for the expansion of primary schools?
 - Would it be useful to have specific policy relating to the development of new educational establishments – schools and colleges? This would be in addition to the requirement for new schools to be built to nearly zero carbon standards.
- Should there be a separate policy for day care facilities?
 - Are there any new facilities that could be provided and where?
 - Should we continue to have detailed planning policies relating to specific recreational uses such as water-based recreation, commercial riding establishments?
 - What standards should be used to determine the level of open space that is necessary for local communities?



Green Belt

Context

The NPPF is clear in its aim to protect land in the Green Belt from inappropriate development and to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to the Green Belt through Policy CP8 to reflect national policy. As a significant proportion of the District lies within designated Green Belt development needs to be carefully managed and only appropriate uses will be permitted, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated where the harm to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Overarching principle

- Ensure that the Green Belt is protected from inappropriate development and kept permanently open

DP10

Discussion points

- Within the context of the NPPF and Core Strategy CP8 (Green Belt) is a more detailed Green Belt policy needed to guide development proposals?
- Should renewable energy development be supported in the Green Belt?

Green Belt continued

Detailed Green Belt boundary

The NPPF explicitly states that once established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to the Green Belt through Policy CP8 to reflect national policy and the general extent of the Green Belt will be established through the Core Strategy.

Other than defining the precise boundaries for the new development locations as proposed through the Core Strategy (subject to the outcome of the Core Strategy Examination), there may be some scope to review village Inset boundaries and address minor anomalies in the boundary providing the change can be fully justified and exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated within the context of national Green Belt policy as set out in the NPPF. Boundaries should be clearly defined using readily recognisable physical features, such as roads and hedgerows, and likely to permanent.

DP11

Discussion points

- Do you consider there are any exceptional circumstances to justify an amendment to a specific part of the detailed Green Belt boundary? Please indicate the changes sought on an Ordnance Survey map base together with full written justification.

Previously developed sites in the Green Belt

Previous Government advice on Green Belts acknowledged that there may be a number of major existing developed sites (MEDS), either redundant or in continuing use within the Green Belt. These were defined to allow limited infilling and/or redevelopment at those sites in employment use to help to support economic activity. At the educational establishments development may be necessary as part of on-going changes and improvements to education and to assist in securing social and economic benefits for the local community.

It is still Government policy to apply strict control to development in Green Belts. The NPPF states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate. Exceptions to this include 'previously developed sites' (brownfield land), where the NPPF allows limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of the site, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

This represents a significant change in policy direction from previous national policy in now applying to all 'previously developed sites' in the Green Belt rather than just to Major Existing Developed Sites.

DP12

Discussion points

- Should the Council continue the Local Plan Policy GB.3 approach of identifying the largest 'previously developed sites' (current MEDS) to retain a control on the types of uses and a framework for the future of the site?
- If the approach of identifying the largest 'previously developed sites' is continued, are there any other large sites which play an important role or function (e.g. educational or employment) which needs to be safeguarded and enhanced?
- Should a more flexible approach be adopted to the major sites as set out in the NPPF?

Green Infrastructure

Context

The concept of green infrastructure is now firmly embedded in national policy with the NPPF requiring local planning authorities set out a strategic approach to green infrastructure. It defines green infrastructure as a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Core Strategy Policy CP7 'Green Infrastructure' already sets out a requirement to protect and enhance a strategic green infrastructure network across the district. The Placemaking Plan provides the opportunity to develop a more detailed policy framework to set out clear requirements for developers and to take forward the key aspirations of the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

When looking at ways of improving and maintaining the green infrastructure network, particularly in areas where there is going to be rapid growth and development, the whole network of green spaces and corridors needs across the sub-region as one system that works together. As well as identifying the existing network, assets and opportunities for the improvement and creation of new green infrastructure, the Green Infrastructure Strategy will ensure that green infrastructure within and beyond the district is delivered, maintained and managed sustainably and creatively well into the future.

Overarching principles

The Strategy is all about making sure that the natural environment works for the community, by making the most of the benefits that the natural environment can and should be providing for people, places and nature. The range of benefits that green infrastructure can deliver are summarised as:

- Supporting healthy lifestyles and thriving communities
- Providing active access to the outdoors
- Enhancing landscape character and built heritage
- Enhancing biodiversity
- Supporting healthy ecosystems
- Providing climate change solutions
- Invigorating the local economy and natural tourism
- Enhancing sense of place

Significant opportunities will occur to deliver Green Infrastructure alongside growth through new developments and the Strategy includes a related high level principle:

Green Infrastructure should be central to the design of new developments. Proposals should respect and enhance green infrastructure within the site and demonstrate strong links to the wider network.

The Green Infrastructure principles set out in the Strategy need to be embedded in development proposals of all scales. The Core Strategy includes an illustrative strategic Green Infrastructure network and work is progressing on defining assets and opportunities for the three urban areas (Bath, Somer Valley and Keynsham/Saltford) and also at parish and ward levels to support neighbourhood planning.



Green Infrastructure continued Landscape

DP13

Discussion points

- How can the Placemaking Plan best ensure that the Green Infrastructure benefits are realised?
- Should the policy be supported by the maps which indicate existing Green Infrastructure assets and opportunities for enhancements?
- Should the policy be supported by neighbourhood maps (ward and parish) which indicate existing Green Infrastructure assets and opportunities for enhancements?
- Do you think all major development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment defining the existing Green Infrastructure assets within the site and opportunities for increasing benefits, and demonstrate strong links to the wider green infrastructure network?

Context

Core Strategy Policy CP6 'Environmental Quality' seeks to conserve or enhance the distinctive character and quality of Bath & North East Somerset's landscapes. However it is considered that this policy alone might not provide sufficient guidance for properly considering the impact of development proposals on landscape character. We intend to develop a more detailed landscape policy following the principles contained in the European Landscape Convention (ELC) which promotes the protection, planning and management of all landscapes. This includes urban areas, towns, villages, countryside and applies to ordinary and degraded landscapes as well those protected nationally (AONBs and Historic Parks and Gardens).

Some overarching principles

- Importance of landscape character and views is fundamental to all decision making
- Safeguard distinctive landscapes and the features that make them distinctive
- Conserve and enhance protected landscapes including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty whilst taking into account the interests of those who live and work there
- Conserve and enhance other landscapes and landscape features including those valued by local communities
- Put appropriate safeguards in place for enhancing protected and degraded landscapes
- Ensure cultural social, cultural, and environmental significance of landscape character is understood and this understanding is reflected in proposals

Locally valued landscapes

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as: "... an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors." Ensuring locally valued landscapes are safeguarded and enhanced is integral to securing a high quality environment and landscape character and views should be key considerations in all decision making. As highlighted in the draft Core Strategy and elsewhere Bath and North East Somerset benefits from a range of distinctive landscapes which are important for social, cultural, economic and environmental reasons.

The NPPF emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Although national policy continues to place great weight on conserving landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs there is little guidance on the protection of local valued landscapes. There are areas of landscape outside nationally designated sites that are highly valued locally. Previous Local Plans have identified and safeguarded a number of local landscape designations across the district including the Landscape Character Areas, Visually Important Open Spaces, Important Hillside and Village Buffers.

Landscape continued

DP14

Discussion points

- Should a more detailed landscape policy be developed which promotes the protection, planning and management of all landscapes regardless of whether they enjoy national protection, or would such a policy hinder agricultural diversification?
 - Designated landscapes including AONBs and Historic Parks and Gardens are already shown on the Policies Map. Do you think it would be helpful to identify local valued landscapes features/character areas?
 - Should appropriate safeguards be put in place for enhancing degraded landscapes?
 - It important to ensure that cultural social, cultural, and environmental significance of landscape character is understood and this understanding is reflected in proposals. How can this be best achieved?
- Is it important to protect landscape and topographical features which contribute to local distinctiveness and identity? Should important open hillsides be identified and protected from harmful development?
 - How can we ensure important views are safeguarded in decision making?
 - How important is it to maintain the separate identity of those settlements outside the Green Belt? Should the Local Plan 'village buffers' policy be retained?

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Core Strategy Policy CP6 sets out the high level policy approach to the natural environment within which more detailed Development Management policies can be developed. It highlights the need to create a coherent network of more robust and resilient natural habitats, including larger protected sites and a greater extent and connectivity of natural habitats.

Some overarching principles

- Need to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity and resilience of the wildlife and species and habitats in both urban and rural areas
- Provide for the appropriate management the District's biodiversity and geodiversity assets through the planning process and partnership initiatives
- Ensure that a coherent network of wildlife corridors is retained and enhanced to facilitate migration through the landscape and built environment which can be incorporated into a broader Green Infrastructure network.



Biodiversity and the natural environment continued

The NPPF asks local planning authorities to set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites will be judged. It also should plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.

The adopted Local Plan already includes a number of detailed nature conservation policies which seek to conserve and increase the abundance and diversity of Bath and North East Somerset's wildlife habitats species and to minimise adverse effects where conflicts of interest are unavoidable. These cover internationally, nationally, and locally important sites, species and habitats as well as a policy which seeks to protect a range of natural features such as trees, copses, woodlands, batches, ponds, hedgerows, stone walls, orchards and water course which are valuable for wildlife, amenity, historic, recreational or visual reasons and which can act as routes for wildlife migration. These policies clearly articulate what is required of developers when submitting a planning application which either directly or indirectly affects wildlife sites or habitats.

DP15

Discussion points

In reviewing the existing policy framework for nature conservation:

- Is there a need for policy to protect Ecosystem services, or is reference in Green Infrastructure Strategy sufficient?
- Is there a need to address more overtly the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity through a policy?
- Is there a need for new policy to address restoration of priority species populations and restoration and re-creation of priority habitat?
- Is there a case for including the nature conservation policy framework entirely within the Green Infrastructure policy framework?

- The hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites is already shown on the Proposals Map. What other 'components' should be mapped to ensure a comprehensive network is identified?
- The NPPF states that areas identified by 'local partnerships' for habitat restoration or creation should also be mapped. Do you think it is appropriate for this to use the South West Nature Map and Avon Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Atlas?

The Natural Environment White Paper sets out a vision for Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) to be created wherever the opportunities or benefits are greatest. These are landscape-scale initiatives aim to ensure that land is used sustainably to achieve multiple benefits for people, wildlife and the local economy. The NPPF states that Nature Improvement Areas should be supported and where they are identified in Local Plans, local planning authorities should consider specifying the types of development that may be appropriate in these Areas.

DP16

Discussion points

- As the White Paper suggests it is for Local Planning Authorities to decide whether and how to recognise an NIA in their local plans, what do you consider is the best approach to recognising any NIA that may be identified?

Historic environment

Context

The importance of the historic environment is recognised by the Government as being 'an asset of enormous cultural, social, economic and environmental value. It makes a very real contribution to our quality of life and the quality of our places.'

Some overarching principles

- Preserve and ensure every opportunity is taken to enhance the historic environment
- Promote a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment
- Ensure the significance and contribution the historic environment has to local identity and distinctiveness is understood
- Historic environment to be seen as an opportunity to expect high standards of design and architecture
- Support development which makes a positive contribution to local identity and character
- Support the sensitive retrofitting of historic buildings for energy efficiency

The Core Strategy establishes the Council's overarching approach towards enhancing and protecting the district's high quality environment through Policy CP6 (2). As well as ensuring our heritage environment is sensitively managed and promoted in its own right, our heritage assets should be used as an integral part of regeneration wherever possible, and to expect the highest standards of new design and architecture. With the benefit of a clear understanding and assessment of the significance of heritage assets developers should view the historic environment as an opportunity not a constraint, which can be improved and enhanced by well-designed development. A heritage asset may comprise a building, structure, historic settlement, archaeological site or landscape/landscape feature.

The Placemaking Plan will continue to promote a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. The policy framework in the Placemaking Plan, once developed, will provide more detailed guidance to help ensure that the District's architectural and heritage interest is preserved and enhanced as a finite and irreplaceable resource and for its own sake and will acknowledge the key role the historic environment plays in contributing to local distinctiveness and the sense of place.

World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and conservation areas are all heritage assets which enjoy statutory protection. However not all heritage assets sites are nationally designated. Government guidance (contained in the NPPF) makes it clear that the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should also be taken into account in determining the application. Information on sites of local importance can be obtained from the Historic Environment Record held by the Council.



Historic environment continued

DP17

Discussion points

Do you think the detailed policy framework should ensure:

- The applicant provides sufficient information and/or assessments of the historic environment to support the merits of the scheme?
- The local planning authority maintains and makes available the Historic Environment Record (HER) for developers to inform the application and the developer make any evidence on the significance of heritage asset(s) to be affected publicly available and to inform the Historic Environment Record?
- The significance of the heritage asset and its conservation is weighed against the wider benefits of the proposal, and the more important the designated heritage asset the more weight will be given to its conservation and enhancement, for example to enable less important heritage assets to be retrofitted for energy efficiency?
- Non-designated heritage assets of equal significance to designated historic assets will be subject to the same policy considerations as designated heritage assets?
- The degree of harm to or loss of the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be balanced against the extent to which proposed scheme makes a positive contribution and/or the harm/loss can be mitigated?
- Substantial, total loss or the demolition of a designated heritage asset(s) is wholly exceptional unless it can be demonstrated the scheme has overwhelming public benefit that outweighs the loss or harm to the heritage asset(s)?

Sustainable transport

Context

It is important that the need for new development is balanced with minimising traffic congestion and to make places more accessible by sustainable modes of transport. This reflects the approach outlined in the Core Strategy which places emphasis on the need to reduce car dependency and promoting sustainable modes of transport. One of the core principles of the NPPF is to 'actively manage patterns of growth to make fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.' This principle will underpin the sustainable transport policies in this Plan.

Some overarching principles

- Enable a shift to more sustainable modes of transport
- Reduce dependency on the private car in particular by limiting car parking where appropriate
- Need to identify and safeguard routes crucial to widen transport choice and support major new development
- Need to provide safe sustainable transport routes
- Promote walking and cycling to promote health and wellbeing

Sustainable transport continued

DP18

Discussion points

Promoting sustainable travel

Ideas for a policy framework that promotes sustainable travel. How should it:

- Encourage movement by public transport, bicycle and on foot, including traffic management and assisting the integration of all forms of transport?
- Seek the improvement of existing and the provision of new public transport facilities?
- Enhance facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired?
- Use former railway land for sustainable transport purposes?

Key transport infrastructure

The NPPF advises that Local planning authorities should identify and protect where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice. The Council inherited a number of highway improvement schemes from Avon County Council. Those which required a substantial land allocation are listed in adopted Local Plan:

- Lower Bristol Road, Bath (A36) Stages 1, 2 and 3 - A4 junction Newbridge to Churchill Bridge
- London Road West/Gloucester Road, Bath
- Rossiter Road, Bath
- A37 Clutton and Temple Cloud Bypass (Western Route)
- Whitchurch Bypass (A37)*

*Please note that the Land at Sleep Lane currently identified and safeguarded for the Whitchurch by-pass has been granted planning permission on appeal for housing development. However, this scheme has not currently been implemented and until such time there may be scope to continue to safeguard the route.

DP19

Discussion points

- Is there sufficient evidence or reason to justify the retention of these schemes through the Placemaking Plan?
- Are there further major transport routes or infrastructure that should be identified and protected in order to help deliver development and widen transport choice?

DP20

Discussion points: Traffic management

- Should the policy framework only relate to traffic management proposals for the centres of Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock?
- Should through traffic and other unnecessary motorised vehicles be discouraged from the main shopping streets?
- How should the amount and speed of traffic in residential areas be reduced and how should through traffic be discouraged from using unsuitable routes?

DP21

Discussion points: Park & Ride

- What essential criteria should be included in a policy framework for new or expansion of existing Park and Ride sites?
- In view of the need for a Park and Ride facility to the east of Bath, should a specific site be investigated and allocated through the Placemaking Plan?

DP22

Discussion points: Parking

- Recognising that Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock have very different parking requirements, how can we ensure the appropriate provision of public and on-street car parking to serve these different areas?



Sustainable transport continued

DP23

Discussion points: Transport, access and development management

Ideas for a policy framework for transport, access and development management. For development proposals should we always expect:

- A high standard of highway safety?
- Safe and convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists and with mobility impairment?
- Suitable vehicular access and appropriate level of on-site servicing and parking is provided?
- No introduction of traffic of excessive volume, size or weight onto an unsuitable road system or into an environmentally sensitive area?
- Provision is made for any improvements to the transport system if required to render the development proposal acceptable?
- Expect planning applications for development that generate significant levels of movement to be accompanied by a transport assessment or transport statement?

Parking Standards

The adopted Local Plan currently requires that an appropriate level of on-site servicing and parking is provided having regard to the parking standards attached to this policy. These are currently maximum car parking standards which accords with previous national planning policy in PPG13 (Transport) with the intention of promoting more sustainable transport choices and the efficient use of land. The NPPF has since adopted a more flexible approach to parking by referring to both residential and non-residential development, leaving it to local authorities to decide whether there is a need for parking standards.

DP24

Discussion points

- The current Local Plan policy will allow development if an appropriate level of parking is provided having regard to the parking standards, thus providing a basis for negotiation. Do you think this general approach is still appropriate?
- Should there be a stronger policy to minimise reliance on the car, for example policy to ensure that car parking is not the dominant use of the street, e.g. parking at the outskirts of the development as per “car free”?
- Should the Council continue to use the parking standards as set out in the adopted Local Plan until such time they are reviewed?
- Should the Council seek to adopt interim advice on parking standards to taking account of the NPPF advice?

Minerals

Context

Core Strategy Policy CP8a already sets out the strategic approach to minerals for Bath & North East Somerset and seeks to ensure that mineral resources continue to be safeguarded. The Core Strategy also commits to defining Minerals Safeguarding Areas and developing more detailed policy guidance on mineral related issues through the Placemaking Plan. This includes a review of the existing minerals policies, allocations and designations to ensure the aims of the NPPF are reflected in local policy.



Minerals continued

Some overarching principles

- ensure the most efficient use of minerals is made as a finite natural resource
- define minerals safeguarding areas to ensure minerals which have the potential for further exploitation are not needlessly sterilise by non-mineral development
- encourage the prior extraction of minerals where it is practicable and viable environmentally
- seek to avoid any detrimental impact on the natural, historic and on health from permitted operations

Mineral Safeguarding Areas

The existing Local Plan identifies Mineral Safeguarding Areas (previously termed Mineral Consultation Areas) around the active mineral sites in the Plan area to avoid the needless sterilisation of mineral resources by non mineral development. The boundaries of the mineral consultation areas have been reviewed. Given the level of current and likely future mineral activity in the Plan area no extension of the currently safeguarded areas is considered necessary. The general extent of the surface coal Mineral Safeguarding Area within the District is defined in Diagram 20a in the Core Strategy on the basis of information supplied by the Coal Authority.

DP25

Discussion points

- Should non-mineral development only be allowed in Mineral Safeguarding Areas providing it does not sterilise or unduly restrict the extraction of mineral deposits which are, or may become, of economic importance and which are capable of being worked?

Minerals Allocations

The existing Local Plan identifies minerals allocation for future extraction at Stowey Quarry, Upper Lawn Quarry and Hayes Wood Mine (also known as Stoke Hill Mine).

However Stowey Quarry has now been worked to its maximum extent and given the focus of existing permissions on inert waste recycling and restoration it is considered that future expansion of the quarrying activities is unlikely.

DP26

Discussion points

- Do you agree that Upper Lawn Quarry, Bath and Stoke Hill Mine, Limpley Stoke continue to be allocated for mineral extraction?

Aggregate Recycling Facilities

Existing or approved aggregate recycling facilities in the Plan area are located at the former Fullers Earthworks site, Odd Down and Stowey Quarry.

DP27

Discussion points

- Having regard to the often temporary nature of these facilities it may be preferable for any future proposals that may come forward to be dealt with by a criteria based policy rather than by allocating specific sites/areas. Do you agree with this approach?

Minerals continued

Winning and Working of Minerals

DP28

Discussion points

- There is a low level of mineral activity within Bath and North East Somerset and this situation is unlikely to significantly change. Should a policy framework be developed against which all minerals developments will be determined providing the same overall level of environmental protection as the adopted Local Plan policies and provision for future working appropriate to the Plan area?

Energy Minerals

Since the adoption of the existing Local Plan one new mineral related issue has arisen, that of coal bed methane extraction. Licences for exploration have been granted within the Plan area and in neighbouring authorities, and there has been interest in developing exploration boreholes within the Plan area.

The particular concern that exists in respect of this activity is that it involves deep drilling and fracturing of the deep geological resource in order to extract shale gas. This has implications for the Bath Hot Springs which relies on underground water resources from a wide geographical area and the potential disruption that deep drilling and fracturing (Fracking) may cause. The Council will continue working with adjoining authorities to ensure the Bath Hot Springs are adequately safeguarded from these proposals (see also the specific reference to the Hot Springs in the next section).

DP29

Discussion points

- Because of the international importance of the Bath Hot Springs do you agree that a precautionary approach should be applied to all proposals for shale gas exploration and extraction within the Plan area?

Pollution, health and safety

Context

The Core Strategy objectives make clear reference for the need to help avoid water, air, light and noise pollution and the contamination of land. The Placemaking Plan provides the opportunity to review the existing Local Plan policies relating to these topic areas and others to ensure any potential adverse impacts of development on environmental amenity, biodiversity and health, safety and well-being is minimised and at best avoided.

Some overarching principles

- Minimise use of non-renewable or carbon intensive resources and promote the reuse of existing structures and materials
- Minimise land contamination and soil degradation
- Minimise/mitigate against effects of pollution (e.g. Air quality, noise, land contamination, light, groundwater)
- Protect and enhance the quality of the underlying groundwater or surface water

What would be the most appropriate planning policy framework for delivering these overarching principles through the Placemaking Plan? As a start we have suggested the following topic areas should be covered which would involve reviewing a number of saved Local Plan policies, including the following:

- Foul and surface water drainage
- Pollution and nuisance
- Safety hazards
- Unstable land
- Contaminated land
- Air quality
- Ground source protection
- Bath Hot Springs

DP30

Discussion points

- Do you agree that it would be useful to review the Local Plan policies listed above to ensure that our health, safety, amenity and well-being are safeguarded, also taking into account the impacts on the built and natural environment?
- Are there any other topic areas that should be included within this policy framework?

Pollution, health and safety continued

Bath Hot Springs

As the Bath Hot Springs are one of the key values for which Bath is inscribed as a World Heritage Site and the only hot springs in the UK, their protection merits particular discussion. Core Strategy Policy B4 'The World Heritage Site and its Setting' applies to the general protection of the Hot Springs. Adopted Local Plan NE.13A relates to quality or yield of the Hot Springs so consistent with a thread running through the NPPF in seeking to protect non-renewable resources. This policy is linked to the Avon Act 1983 and is important to retain particularly to safeguard the Hot Springs from any potential proposals for energy mineral exploration and extraction which may impact on Hot Springs and their sources (see also reference in the Minerals section).

DP31

Discussion points

- Should the Placemaking Plan adopt the same policy approach to that in the Local Plan to ensure that development that has an adverse impact on the quality or yield of the Bath Hot Spring is not permitted?

Other issues and policies

There are a number of other useful saved Local Plan policies which could be taken forward into the Placemaking Plan with no fundamental changes except to ensure compliance with the NPPF. These include:

- Allocation of land for primary schools
- Allocation of land for cemeteries
- Protection of recreational routes
- Commercial riding establishments
- Telecommunications development
- Residential development in villages within the Green Belt
- Extensions to buildings in the Green Belt
- Replacement dwellings
- Residential moorings
- Visual amenities of the Green Belt
- Trees and woodland conservation
- External lighting
- Retention of the rail freight facility at Westmoreland Station Road, Bath for waste transfer

There may be other Development Management policies needed to help deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy and respond to issues arising through the NPPF to ensure the aims of national and local sustainable development agendas can be met.

DP32

Discussion points

- Are there any other matters that have not already been addressed in this Launch Document that would help deliver the Core Strategy and respond to issues raised through the NPPF?
- Do you have any other suggestions you think will help inform the next stage of the Placemaking Plan where the Council will set out the policy framework to address the issues raised in this document and through engagement and consultation with stakeholders and the community?

Keep up to date by visiting the Placemaking Plan webpage:

www.bathnes.gov.uk/placemakingplan

