

**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**



Bath and North East Somerset  
Local Development Framework

**Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt**

**Supplementary Planning Document**

**Draft Sustainability Appraisal**

**Planning Services  
Bath & North East Somerset Council**

**February 2008  
v.2**

## 1. Non-technical summary

### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document will provide further information and guidance about replacement dwellings and residential extensions in the Green Belt, supplementing policies HG.14 and HG.15 of the *Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan*.
- 1.1.2 The SPD will provide further information on the interpretation of these policies and details of how they will be applied. Once adopted this SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.1.3 This document forms the Sustainability Appraisal Report for this SPD. It includes an appraisal of the effects of the Draft SPD.

### 1.2 Outcome Statement-

- 1.2.1 Sustainability Appraisals are now an integral part of producing planning documents under the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* (the Act). When preparing SPDs local authorities must also meet the requirements of the *European Directive 2001/42/EC* 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.
- 1.2.2 Overall it is considered that the draft SPD will make a positive contribution to sustainable development.

### 1.3 How to comment on the report

- 1.3.1 The Council welcomes your comments on this draft Sustainability Appraisal. These should be sent to [planning\\_policy@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:planning_policy@bathnes.gov.uk) or the following address by xxxxx 2008 at the latest.

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### 1.4 Next Steps

- 1.4.1 On adoption of the SPD a final Sustainability Appraisal Statement will be prepared which will set out:
  - Any final changes to or deletions from the SPD in response to the information in the SA report;
  - Ways in which responses to consultation on the SA have been taken into account;
  - Reasons for choosing the SPD as adopted, and why other reasonable alternatives were rejected; and
  - Confirmation of monitoring criteria.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of the SPD.
- 2.1.2 At the initial stage of the SA, the Council published a *Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report*. This report set out the SA framework which will be used to test the SPDs objectives and help to identify the most sustainable approach available. It also identifies the issues that the Local Planning Authority is seeking to address through the SPD in order to achieve sustainable development in the District.

### 2.2 Compliance with the SEA Directive/Regulations

- 2.2.1 Sustainability Appraisals are now an integral part of producing planning documents under *the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*. When preparing SPDs local authorities must also meet the requirements of *the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC*. The SEA Directive was transposed in the UK by *the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004* applying to plans and programmes with a significant environmental effect. The SEA process is aimed at providing strategic alternatives and concentrates more specifically on the environmental issues of sustainability.
- 2.2.2 The report accords to the SA procedures set out in *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks* and Communities and Local Government's Guidance on *Sustainability Appraisals on Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (2005)* which has recommended a combined assessment approach integrating SEA and SA. This report complies with the SEA regulations.

### 2.3 Appropriate Assessment

- 2.3.1 Under Article 6(3) and (4) of the *EEC Habitats Directive 1992*, Appropriate Assessment are required where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon 'Natura 2000 Sites'. There are a number of these sites in the District.
- 2.3.2 Once adopted the SPD will be a material consideration in planning applications involving proposals for householder extensions and replacement dwellings, but only for sites within the Green Belt. The SPD does not allocate the use of specific sites. As a consequence the SPD is not likely to have any direct significant effect on sites of European importance, hence an Appropriate Assessment of the draft SPD is considered not to be required. [Natural England was consulted in February 2008 for their screening report... TBC](#)

### 2.4 Brief for the SPD

- 2.4.1 National *Planning Policy Guidance 2* on Green Belts outlines the need for local planning authorities to make clear the approach that they will take in relation to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and the circumstances under which replacement dwellings are acceptable.
- 2.4.2 The SPD will set out detailed planning guidance to supplement the Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan (Adopted 2007) policy on the list of replacement dwellings and extensions to residential properties in the Green Belt (Policies HG.14 and HG.15).

2.4.3 The Local Plan policies which the SPD will supplement are outlined below:

**Policy HG.14 of the Local Plan:**

Outside the scope of policies HG.4 and HG.6 permission will only be given for:

- i) the rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings, where the replacement or reconstructed dwelling and ancillary buildings would not be materially larger, and would not have a materially greater impact on the countryside or openness of the Green Belt, than that to be replaced; and
- ii) the creation or extension of any residential curtilage would not detract from rural character nor conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt.

**Policy HG.15 of the Local Plan:**

Proposals to extend a dwelling in the Green Belt will be permitted unless they would:

- i) represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling;
- ii) contribute to a deterioration in rural character as a result of the cumulative effect of dwelling extensions.

## Appraisal Methodology

### 2.5 Approach adopted to this Sustainability Appraisal

2.5.1 The methodology for this appraisal was developed in accordance with guidance published by the ODPM (now DCLG)<sup>1</sup> as outlined in the table below. In order to carry out the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process effectively in an integrated manner, the Council has established an SA Group. This Group consists of officers with specialised expertise to cover Economic, Social and Environmental fields. The SA Group work is led by the Planning Policy Team and SA workshops were held parallel with the SPD preparation process in order to appraise the SPD as it was being drafted.

**Table 1: Key Tasks for Sustainability Appraisals**

<b>Stage A:</b>	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope
Task A1:	Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives
Task A2:	Collecting baseline information
Task A3:	Identifying sustainability issues and problems
Task A4:	Developing the SA Framework
Task A5:	Consulting on the scope of the SA
<b>Stage B:</b>	Developing and Refining Options and assessing effects
Task B1:	Testing the SPD objectives against the SA framework
Task B2:	Developing the SPD options.
Task B3:	Predicting the effects of the draft SPD
Task B4:	Evaluating the effects of the draft SPD
Task B5:	Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects.
Task B6:	Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the SPD.
<b>Stage C:</b>	Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report
Task C1:	Preparing SA Report
<b>Stage D:</b>	Consulting on draft SPD and SA Report
Task D1:	Public participation on the SA Report and the draft SPD
Task D2:	Assessing significant changes
Task D3:	Making decisions and providing information
<b>Stage E:</b>	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the SPD
Task E1:	Finalising aims and methods for monitoring.
Task E2:	Responding to adverse effects.

Source: Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM Nov 2005)

<sup>1</sup> Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM Nov 2005)

## **2.6 The SA Scoping Report**

2.6.1 Stage A of the methodology has been undertaken and consultation for the SA Scoping Report took place in July 2007. The report was submitted to the following consultees:

- o English Heritage
- o Environment Agency
- o Natural England
- o Government Office for the South West
- o Highways Agency

2.6.2 This draft SA report is also being circulated to the consultees listed above.

## **2.7 Difficulties encountered in compiling information or carrying out the assessment**

### *Baseline Data*

2.7.1 There were no significant difficulties encountered compiling baseline data and information for the Sustainability Scoping Report or this draft Sustainability Appraisal. Accessible records are held on the amount and nature of Green Belt land in the district, on planning applications and planning appeals which relate to extensions and replacement dwellings in the Green Belt. These records enabled baseline data to be compiled as relevant to this SPD.

### *Comparing Options for the SPD*

2.7.2 The SPD expands on and provides additional detail on the interpretation of Local Plan policies which relate specifically to extensions and replacement dwellings in the Green Belt. It was difficult to distinguish the effect of the two options of (i) having the SPD or (ii) relying on existing Local Plan policy when considering the impact on high level sustainability objectives. In many instances the impact of the SPD on the sustainability objectives over and above the impact of the Local Plan policies was negligible. This comparison of options is outlined in section 5 of this draft SA.

### *Monitoring the Effectiveness of the SPD*

2.7.3 As this SPD supplements existing Local Plan policies which are already being used by the Local Planning Authority it is anticipated that monitoring the effectiveness of the SPD will be difficult. The SPD should help with the implementation and enforcement of Local Plan policies HG.14 and HG.15 although these policies would still be utilised without the existence of the SPD. It will be difficult to separate the effectiveness of the SPD and the Local Plan policies it supplements.

2.7.4 Furthermore, while it is relatively straightforward to monitor quantitative measures of the effectiveness of the SPD (e.g. numbers of applications and determination). It is more difficult to measure the effectiveness of the SPD in terms of the clarity and detail that it will offer to householders, planning officers and planning committees and the greater consistency it should provide. These issues will be revisited in section 6 of this draft SA where monitoring indicators for the SPD are proposed.

### 3. Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

#### 3.1 Links to other strategies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives

- 3.1.1 A review of all relevant plans, programmes and policies has been carried out to establish the SA Framework for the emerging B&NES Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD. This review was used as the basis for identifying key sustainability issues that are relevant to this SPD. Only those plans that are directly relevant to the emerging SPD and to the sustainability effects this is likely to have were carried forward to the SA Scoping Report and this draft SA. Detailed reviews were presented as part of the Scoping Report and the key findings are set out in *Appendix A*.

#### 3.2 Baseline information

- 3.2.1 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and issues.
- 3.2.2 The baseline data collated as part of the Scoping Report has been extracted from a range of information sources and is summarised in *Appendix B*.
- 3.2.3 Specific baseline data in relation to the numbers of appeals and planning applications involving proposals for replacement dwellings and extensions in the Green Belt and the determination of these applications was collected as part of the SA Scoping Report. This data will be used as a baseline for the monitoring criteria.

#### 3.3 Main sustainability opportunities and problems identified

- 3.3.1 The SEA Directive requires that environmental problems be identified and analysed in an Environmental Report. This is incorporated within this SA. The key sustainability issues in relation to the SPD within B&NES have been identified as part of the policy and baseline review.
- 3.3.2 The main sustainability issues in relation to this SPD are as follows:
- Preserving the setting and special character of the City of Bath, the town of Keynsham and the many villages in the rural areas of Bath & North East Somerset
  - Protecting rural character
  - Maintaining and enhancing landscape character and local distinctiveness
  - Maintaining the openness of the Green Belt
  - Maintaining and enhancing environmental quality, and wildlife interest in the Green Belt
  - Promoting the efficient use of previously developed (brownfield) land
  - Facilitating appropriate residential development in the Green Belt (solely in terms of extensions and replacement dwellings) which meets the needs of residents
  - Making the best use of existing resources including empty or under-used housing
  - The need to mitigate and to adapt to the effects of climate change
  - Considering the need to improve existing substandard access onto the truck road network

### 3.4 The SA Framework

- 3.4.1 The Sustainability Appraisals Framework for the emerging Core Strategy was used as the main starting point for draft objectives for the SPD. The Framework was reassessed according to the reviews of the policies, baseline information and key sustainability issues.
- 3.4.2 Table below will be used to assess the relative performance of each option and objective.

#### SA objectives

SEA/SA Objectives	
Objective 1	Improve accessibility to community facilities and local services
Objective 2	Improve the health and well-being of all communities
Objective 3	Meet identified needs for sufficient and high quality housing
Objective 4	Increase availability of affordable and specific needs housing
Objective 5	Promote stronger and more cohesive communities
Objective 6	Reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime
Objective 7	Improve the availability and provision of training
Objective 8	Ensure communities have access to a wide range of employment opportunities
Objective 9	Enable local businesses to prosper
Objective 10	Promote vibrant city, town, local and village centres
Objective 11	Increase availability of local produce and materials
Objective 12	Ensure everyone has access to high quality and affordable public transport and promote cycling and walking
Objective 13	Reduce the need and desire to travel by car
Objective 14	Protect and enhance local distinctiveness
Objective 15	Protect and enhance the district's historic environment
Objective 16	Encourage and protect habitats and biodiversity.
Objective 17	Protect and enhance the district's cultural assets
Objective 18	Reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions
Objective 19	Encourage sustainable construction
Objective 20	Ensure the development of sustainable and/or local energy sources and energy infrastructure
Objective 21	Reduce vulnerability to, and manage flood risk
Objective 22	Encourage careful and efficient use of natural resources
Objective 23	Promote waste management accordance with the waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle)



## 4. Draft SPD objectives

### 4.1 Compatibility test: SPD Objectives

4.1.1 It is important for the objectives of the SPD to be in accordance with sustainability principles. The objectives should be tested for compatibility with the SA objectives. This will help in refining the SPD objectives as well as in identifying options. The SPD objectives also need to be consistent with each other, and the SA objectives will be one way of checking for this. Where there is conflict between objectives, the LPA will need to reach a decision on priorities.

#### 4.1.2 SPD Objectives

SPD Objective A: To provide clear guidance on approach that the LPA will take in relation to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and the circumstances under which replacement dwellings are acceptable

SPD Objective B: Resist inappropriate development in the Green Belt

SPD Objective C: To protect, maintain and enhance the openness of the Green Belt

SPD Objective D: To protect, maintain and enhance rural character

#### Scoring Criteria:

Symbol	Compatibilities
	Potential Compatibility
-	Neutral
x	Potential Conflict

		SPD Objectives			
		Objective A	Objective B	Objective C	Objective D
<b>SA Objectives</b>	Objective 1		-	-	-
	Objective 2	-	-	-	-
	Objective 3	/x	/x	-	-
	Objective 4	-	-	-	-
	Objective 5		-	-	-
	Objective 6	-	-	-	-
	Objective 7	-	-	-	-
	Objective 8	-	-	-	-
	Objective 9	-	x	-	-
	Objective 10	-		-	
	Objective 11	-	-	-	-
	Objective 12	-	-	-	-
	Objective 13	-	-	-	-
	Objective 14				
	Objective 15				
	Objective 16				
	Objective 17				
	Objective 18	-	-	-	-
	Objective 19			-	-
	Objective 20	-	-	-	-
	Objective 21	-	-	-	-
	Objective 22			-	-
	Objective 23			-	-

- 4.1.3 The Objectives outlined relate to Local Plan policies HG.14 and HG.15 as well as the SPD which supplements these. Objective A relates more specifically to the SPD. The table shows that the majority of the SPD and SA objectives are neutral or compatible. There are two instances where the SPD objectives are potentially in conflict with the SA Objectives.
- 4.1.4 National Green Belt policy generally promotes sustainable development, and this is reflected in this appraisal.
- 4.1.5 SPD objective A scores positively in terms of providing a local service (SA objective 1) and promoting stronger communities (SA objective 5) as the SPD itself will provide information and guidance for the public. In providing clearer guidance the SPD will also contribute to local distinctiveness, biodiversity, enhancing cultural assets, protecting the historic environment. By providing some sustainable construction principles the SPD can contribute positively to SA objectives 19, 22 and 23.
- 4.1.6 For SPD objective A, there may be some conflict in relation to the provision of housing, as the SPD will clarify the Local Plan policies and this in turn may act to constrain certain types of residential development. It is not considered that the SPD will impact on the provision of affordable housing provision particularly as some exemption is offered in Local Plan policy GB.1.
- 4.1.7 SPD objective B relates to resisting inappropriate residential development in the green belt. This objective scores positively against many of the SA objectives as restriction of development in the Green Belt should assist in promoting cities, towns and village centres for development thus contributing to greater accessibility to services and more sustainable modes of transport. However, by resisting inappropriate residential development in the Green Belt it is recognised that there may be a potential conflict with live-work development which is currently classified as residential. In addition to this there is some potential conflict with housing provision.
- 4.1.8 SPD objectives C and D relate to safeguarding the openness of the green belt and protecting, enhancing and promoting rural character will help local distinctiveness and the protection of the district's historic environment.

## 5. SPD issues and options

### 5.1 Main strategic options considered and how they were identified

- 5.1.1 The draft SPD has been prepared to supplement the policy in the adopted Local Plan (Adopted 2007) therefore has to take the adopted Local Plan policy as the baseline. This draft SA will examine the way the SPD supplements the Local Plan policy and not the policy itself.
- 5.1.2 The key aim of a SA is to consider and appraise the range of options available and to evaluate how the SPD can improve on the current baseline situation. During the development of the SPD, two options were considered:
- 5.1.3 **Option 1: Business as Usual.** Do not produce an SPD. This option relies solely on the existing Local Plan Policies HG.14 and HG.15.
- 5.1.4 **Option 2: Produce an SPD.** Provide further information and guidance on how the local planning authorities will interpret and use Local Plan Policies HG.14 and HG.15 to make clear the approach the LPA will take in relation to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and the circumstances under which replacement dwellings are acceptable.
- 5.1.5 No other realistic options have been identified.

### 5.2 Comparison of the sustainability effects of the options

- 5.2.1 These two options were tested against the draft SA objectives in order to identify the preferred option. Each option is appraised using a series of symbols to indicate levels of positive or negative effects:

#### Scoring Criteria:

Symbol	Likely effect against the SA Objective
++	Very positive
+	Positive
0	Neutral
?	Uncertain of impact or insufficient information on which to determine
-	Negative
--	Very Negative

SEA/SA Objectives		SPD objectives					
		Option 1 Business as Usual			Option 2 Produce an SPD		
		Short term	Medium term	Long term	Short term	Medium term	Long term
Objective 1	Improve accessibility to community facilities and local services	0	0	0	+	+	+
Objective 2	Improve the health and well-being of all communities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 3	Meet identified needs for sufficient and high quality housing	-/+	-/+	-/+	-/+	-/+	-/+
Objective 4	Increase availability of affordable and specific needs housing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 5	Promote stronger and more cohesive communities	0	0	0	+	+	+
Objective 6	Reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 7	Improve the availability and	0	0	0	0	0	0

	provision of training						
Objective 8	Ensure communities have access to a wide range of employment opportunities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 9	Enable local businesses to prosper	?	?	?	?	?	?
Objective 10	Promote vibrant city, town, local and village centres	+	+	+	++	++	++
Objective 11	Increase availability of local produce and materials	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 12	Ensure everyone has access to high quality and affordable public transport and promote cycling and walking	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 13	Reduce the need and desire to travel by car	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 14	Protect and enhance local distinctiveness	+	+	+	++	++	++
Objective 15	Protect and enhance the district's historic environment	+	+	+	++	++	++
Objective 16	Encourage and protect habitats and biodiversity.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Objective 17	Protect and enhance the district's cultural assets	+	+	+	+	+	+
Objective 18	Reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 19	Encourage sustainable construction	0	0	0	+	+	+
Objective 20	Ensure the development of sustainable and/or local energy sources and energy infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 21	Reduce vulnerability to, and manage flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 22	Encourage careful and efficient use of natural resources	0	0	0	+	+	+
Objective 23	Promote waste management accordance with the waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle)	0	0	0	0	0	0

### 5.3 How sustainability issues were considered in choosing the preferred option

5.3.1 Both options have no impact on a significant number of the sustainability objectives. Much depends on the implementation of the policy rather than the contents of the policy/SPD.

5.3.2 Due to the nature of the SPD it often difficult to distinguish the effect of the two options when considering the impact on high level sustainability objectives. In many instances the impact of the SPD on the sustainability objectives over and above the impact of the Local Plan policies was negligible.

#### *Positive impacts of the options on the sustainability objectives*

5.3.3 Some of the sustainability objectives that the options were likely to have a positive impact on are commented on below:

5.3.4 **Objectives 1 & 5:** The SPD itself will provide information and guidance for the public over and above Local Plan policies HG.14 and HG.15.

- 5.3.5 **Objectives 10:** Green Belt policy including Local Plan Policies HG.14, HG.15 and the SPD contribute positively to the promotion of city, town and village centres.
- 5.3.6 **Objectives 14 & 15:** Green Belt policy including Local Plan Policies HG.14, HG.15 and the SPD contribute positively to local distinctiveness and the protection of the setting of historic settlements.
- 5.3.7 **Objectives 16 & 17:** Both options will contribute positively to biodiversity and the enhancement of cultural assets. The countryside is considered to be a cultural asset.
- 5.3.8 **Objectives 19, 22 & 23:** The SPD does offer some limited opportunities to contribute to sustainability objectives 19, 22 and 23 over and above the Local Plan policies HG.14 and HG.15.
- 5.3.9 Reference to sustainable construction and efficient use of natural resources is mentioned in the draft SPD. This reference was added after this opportunity was flagged up in the SPD by a member of the SA Group. Specifically the draft SPD mentions that for replacement dwellings that 'priority will be given to encouraging the reuse of an existing dwelling where possible' and that 'efforts to reuse the existing building materials will be encouraged'. This is also in keeping with the Council's waste hierarchy.

*Potentially negative impacts of the options on the sustainability objectives*

- 5.3.10 Both producing the SPD and the Business as Usual approach may conflict with housing provision (**Objective 3**) and potentially adaptations associated with live work units (**Objective 9**). This is due to the restrictive nature of Green Belt policy in relation to development. It is considered that the wider sustainability benefits outweigh any possible disadvantages.

#### **5.4 Proposed mitigation measures**

- 5.4.1 The SA Report must include measures to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effects of implementing the SPD. By identifying areas of potential conflict these issues are flagged up at the earliest stage. There are no specific mitigation measures proposed as it is considered that individual cases can be assessed at the planning application stage.
- 5.4.2 The benefits of the SPD can be maximised by working closely with the Development Management team and the Development Control Committee to improve the common understanding and application of the guidance.

#### **5.5 Effects of the SPD**

- 5.5.1 The SA has successfully assisted in the preparation of the SPD by identifying areas of opportunity for the SPD to promote sustainable development. The SA shows that overall the SPD is likely to have beneficial effects on the sustainability objectives identified in the framework.

## 6. Implementation

### 6.1 Proposals for monitoring

- 6.1.1 A requirement of the SA process is that the LPAs monitor and address through remedial action, any negative effects resulting from the implementation of an SPD. The LPA will initially monitor the effects of the SPD through the statutory planning application process and will report the monitoring criteria as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 6.1.2 The monitoring criteria which will be included:
- Annual figures for the number of applications for household extensions and replacement dwellings in the Green Belt (including withdrawn applications)
  - Annual figures for the percentage of the above as a percentage of all applications
  - Annual figures for the determination of these applications (% permitted/refused)
- 6.1.3 Additional monitoring criteria which could be included:
- Annual figures for the number of appeals relating to household extensions and replacement dwellings and extensions in the Green Belt
  - Annual figures for the percentage of the above as a percentage of all appeals
  - Feedback on use of SPD from Development Management Team
- 6.1.4 The monitoring criteria above attempt to reconcile the need to use data which is readily available, while at the same time consider the effectiveness of the SPD as a tool to assist with the implementation of existing policies and provide greater clarity.

### 6.2 Next Steps

- 6.2.1 Public Consultation will be undertaken on the *Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt SPD* and this *draft Sustainability Appraisal Report*. We welcome your views on these documents. Comments must be received within the formal six-week consultation period ending on:
- 6.2. **xx May 2008**
- 6.2.3 The document will subsequently proceed to adoption and should eventually become part of the Local Development Framework.
- 6.2.4 The Council welcomes your comments on this draft Sustainability Appraisal. These should be sent to [planning.policy@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@bathnes.gov.uk) or the following address by xx May 2008 at the latest:

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## Appendix A: Summary of relevant plans and strategies

Key Policy	Details of relevance to the plan and SA
<p><b><u>International Policy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ EU Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of Wild Birds European Commission</li> <li>§ EU Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive 1992)</li> <li>§ The Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio de Janeiro 1992</li> <li>§ Managing Natura 2000 sites The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC</li> </ul>	<p>The aim of the Habitats Directive is to create a coherent European ecological network known as Natura 2000. It requires member states to take necessary measures to maintain/ restore habitats and species' populations, maintain Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) at favourable status and develop national biodiversity strategy.</p> <p>Appropriate Assessments must be carried out for any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the sites but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, should be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objective.</p> <p>The aim of the Habitats Directive is to create a coherent European ecological network known as Natura 2000. It requires member states to take necessary measures to maintain/restore habitats and species' populations, maintain Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) at favourable status and develop national biodiversity strategy.</p>
<p><b><u>National Policy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (and supplement to this)</li> <li>§ PPG2: Green Belts</li> <li>§ Town &amp; Country Planning Green Belt Direction (ODPM, 2005)</li> <li>§ PPS3: Housing</li> <li>§ PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</li> <li>§ PPG15: Planning and Historic Environment Community and Local Government</li> <li>§ PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning Community and Local Government</li> <li>§ PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation and Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17</li> <li>§ Streamlining Local Development Frameworks (DCLG Consultation Draft November 2007)</li> </ul>	<p>National Policy (such as UK Sustainable Development Strategy, DEFRA Rural Strategy, PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, PPG16 Archaeology and Planning, PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) aims to balance social progress and economic development with the protection of the natural and built environment.</p> <p><b>PPG2: Green Belts</b> sets the general intentions of green belt policy, reaffirms the specific purposes of including land in green belts, specifies objectives for the use of land in Green Belts and confirms that Green Belts must be protected as far as can be seen ahead.</p> <p>PPG2 maintains the presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts and refines the categories of appropriate development, including making provision for the future of major existing</p>

	<p>developed sites and revising policy on the re-use of buildings.</p> <p>Part 3 of PPG2 outlines the presumption against inappropriate development, defines when the construction of new buildings is not inappropriate (including alteration or extension to existing buildings) and gives details of where the re-use of buildings is not inappropriate.</p> <p><b>PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</b></p> <p>PPS7 outlines of government’s objectives relevant to sustainable development in rural areas.</p> <p>PPS7 also outlines the government policy in relation to planning for housing in rural areas, the re-use of buildings in the countryside and replacement of buildings in the countryside</p> <p><b>PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation</b></p> <p>PPG17 asks LPAs to proactively plan for the protection and enhancement of valued green space in towns and cities, including efficient and effective countryside.</p>
<p>§ Planning for a Sustainable Future White Paper (2007) DCLG (for consultation)</p>	<p>Planning for a Sustainable Future Annex B: Schedule of Government Responses to the Barker Report -Recommendation 9. States that the government is committed to the principles of the Green Belt and will make no fundamental change to policy in this area in current policy reform.</p> <p>The White Paper also suggests the removal of the blanket requirement for SA for SPDs.</p>
<p>§ Changes to Permitted Development. Consultation Paper 1:Permitted Development Rights for Householder Microgeneration</p>	<p>Aims to encourage the residential take-up of microgeneration in order to meet a significant proportion of our future energy needs.</p>
<p>§ Changes to Permitted Development. Consultation Paper 2:Permitted Development Rights for Householders</p>	<p>The consultation paper on Permitted Development Rights for Householders suggests that extensions are the most common type of householder development both in terms of what is permitted development and development which requires planning application.</p> <p>Considers the current system to be regulating development that has no impact beyond the host property. It is also explicitly acknowledged that the current</p>



	<p>framework of householder PD rights is based on arbitrary size and volume based approach, anomalous in terms of impact as to what is and is not permitted.</p> <p>The consultation paper proposes 12 limits for extensions relating to criteria such as: depth of extension; eaves, ridge and roof pitch height of extension; maximum coverage of garden area; use of materials and visibility of extension from highway or from principle elevation.</p> <p>The consultation paper also states that roof extensions are the second most common type of householder development and are particularly prevalent in urban areas. Changes to the GDPO relating to roof extensions and roof alterations are also suggested.</p> <p>Changes to Article 4 directions are also suggested.</p>
<p><b><u>Regional Policy</u></b></p> <p>§ Joint Replacement Structure Plan</p> <p>§ RPG10</p> <p>§ Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (March 2007)</p>	<p>Policy 16 of the Joint Replacement Structure Plan reaffirms the purpose of the Bristol-Bath Green Belt which are to: (1) check the unrestricted sprawl of the Bristol conurbation and Bath; (2) assist in safeguarding the surrounding countryside from encroachment; (3) prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; (4) preserve the setting and special character of villages, towns and historic cities &amp; (5) Assist in urban regeneration.</p> <p>Policy SS.4 of RPG10 confirms that Green Belts in the region should continue to fulfil the purposes set out in PPG2.</p> <p>The draft RSS states that the regions landscape, countryside, historic environment and coast have categories which define the character of the South West (para 1.6.15). The draft RSS also states that development in open countryside, particularly of housing, will be strictly controlled in accordance with national guidance and other policies in the draft RSS (para 3.4.3).</p>
<p><b><u>Local Policy</u></b></p> <p>§ Bath &amp; North East Somerset Local Plan including minerals and waste Adopted 2007</p>	<p>The Local Plan defines some key local policies:</p> <p>§ The settlement classification for the district including for rural settlements (policy SC.1).</p> <p>§ Policy in relation to the re-use of rural buildings (ET.9).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Policy in relation to residential curtilages (HG.11).</li> <li>§ Policy in relation to replacement dwellings (HG.14).</li> <li>§ Policy in relation to householder development in the Green Belt (HG.15).</li> <li>§ Relevant Green Belt policies (GB.1 &amp; GB.2).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Bath &amp; North East Somerset - City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan (2003-2009)</li> </ul>	<p>Main aims of the City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan (2003-2009) are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Promote sustainable management of the World Heritage Site;</li> <li>§ Ensure that the unique qualities and outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site are understood and are sustained in the future;</li> <li>§ Sustain the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site whilst maintaining and promoting Bath as a living and working city which benefits from the status of the World Heritage Site;</li> <li>§ Improve physical access and interpretation, encouraging all people to enjoy and understand the World Heritage Site;</li> <li>§ Improve public awareness of and interest and involvement in the heritage of Bath, achieving a common local, national and international ownership of World Heritage Site management.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (under review - July 2007)</li> </ul>	<p>The Cotswold AONB management plan outlines the vision for planning and development/the historic environment and the living and working landscape in the Cotswold AONB, forces for change and objectives and policies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2004 – 2009</li> </ul>	<p>The Mendip AONB management plan provides a snapshot, a vision, objectives and policies for Mendip AONB.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ 'BE: Better for Everyone - The Community Strategy for Bath &amp; North East Somerset 2004 and beyond'</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Government Act 2000 requires every local authority to prepare a Community Strategy. Community Strategies are designed to improve the quality of life of local communities by linking the actions of councils with those of other public, private and voluntary sector organisations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Bath &amp; North East Somerset's Statement of Community Involvement Adopted 2007</li> </ul>	<p>Outlines how Bath &amp; North East Somerset will consult on SPDs and associated Sustainability Appraisals. Must be read in conjunction with the <i>Town &amp; Country Planning (Local Development) (England)</i></p>

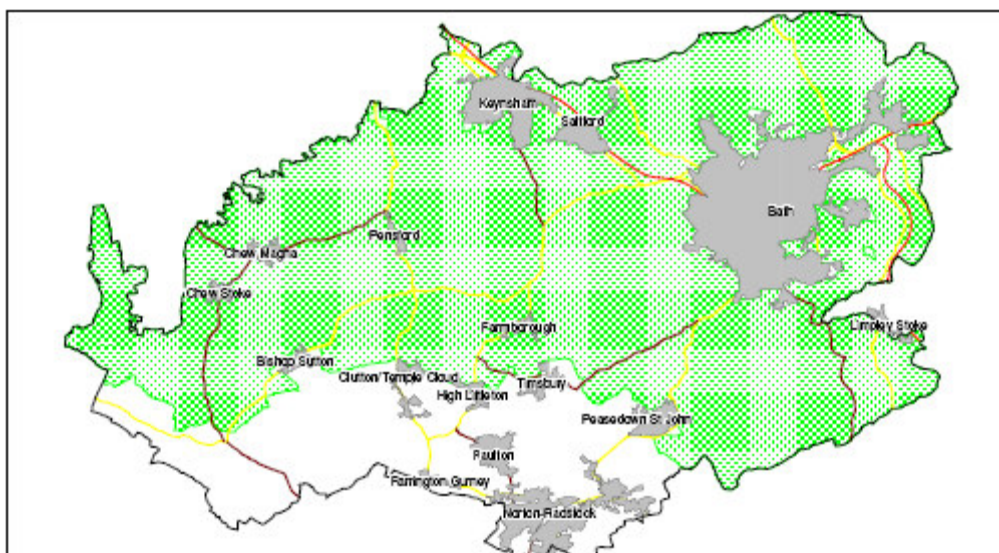
<p>§ Housing Strategy 2005 – 2010 B&amp;NES</p>	<p><i>Regulations, 2004. This SCI has not yet been adopted.</i></p> <p>Relevant strategic objectives from the Housing Strategy are:</p> <p>(1) Affordable Housing: To maximise the supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of local people; promoting and maintaining sustainable balanced communities; and recognising the support requirements of individuals for specialist accommodation.</p> <p>(2) Planning &amp; Empty Homes: Making best use of the local and strategic planning process; identifying assembling and bringing forward and suitable development sites to meet local needs across all tenures; and making the best use of existing resources including empty or under-used housing and other property.</p>
<p>§ Bath City-wide Character Appraisal SPD, 2005 (supplementary to the Bath Local Plan)</p>	<p>Bath &amp; North East Somerset has a rich and diverse range of landscapes.</p>
<p>§ 'Rural Landscapes of Bath &amp; North East Somerset – A Landscape Character Assessment' (2003) SPG</p>	<p>Aims to identify character and inform decisions following the Bath city-wide character appraisal.</p> <p>Overarching objective of maintaining and enhancing landscape character and local distinctiveness.</p>

## Appendix B: Baseline data

Baseline data gives a picture of the current situation and provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the effects of the SPD. It also helps to identify sustainability issues and alternative ways of dealing with them. Baseline data has been collected for the criteria required by the SEA Directive and the UK SEA Regulations. Information collected was primarily focused on the social, environmental and economic characteristics of the area that relate to the issues to be tackled in the SPDs. Baseline information includes data influenced by a number of factors beyond spatial policies.

### Green Belt

The Bristol/Bath Green Belt was designated in 1966 in the Gloucestershire and Somerset County Development Plans. The former Avon area includes 60,760 hectares of designated Green Belt land, over 57% of the total Green Belt designated for the whole of the South West. 21,440 hectares of this is within the B&NES area.

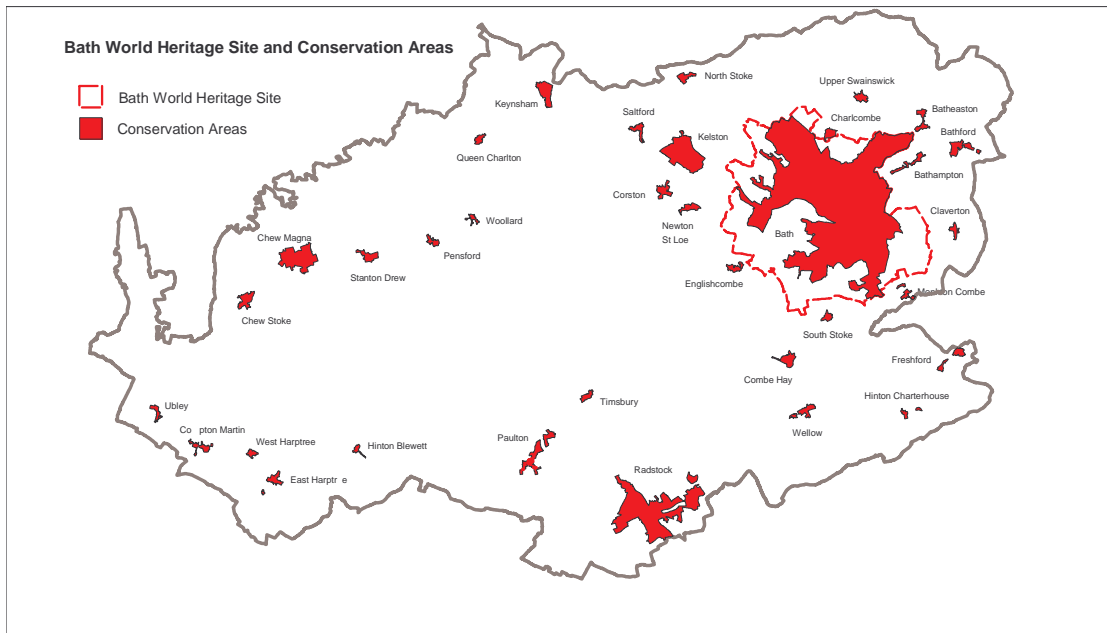


Map 1: General Extent of the Green Belt in Bath & North East Somerset

### Cultural Heritage, Archaeology and Landscape

Thirty seven separate conservation areas have been designated in B&NES since 1968. The total area covered by conservation area status amounts to some 2,310 hectares. The entire city of Bath was designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage site in 1987. B&NES has approximately 6,400 listed buildings and structures in its area of which 5000 lie within the City of Bath.

Many of the settlements within the Green Belt also contain conservation areas; there is significant overlap of these designations.

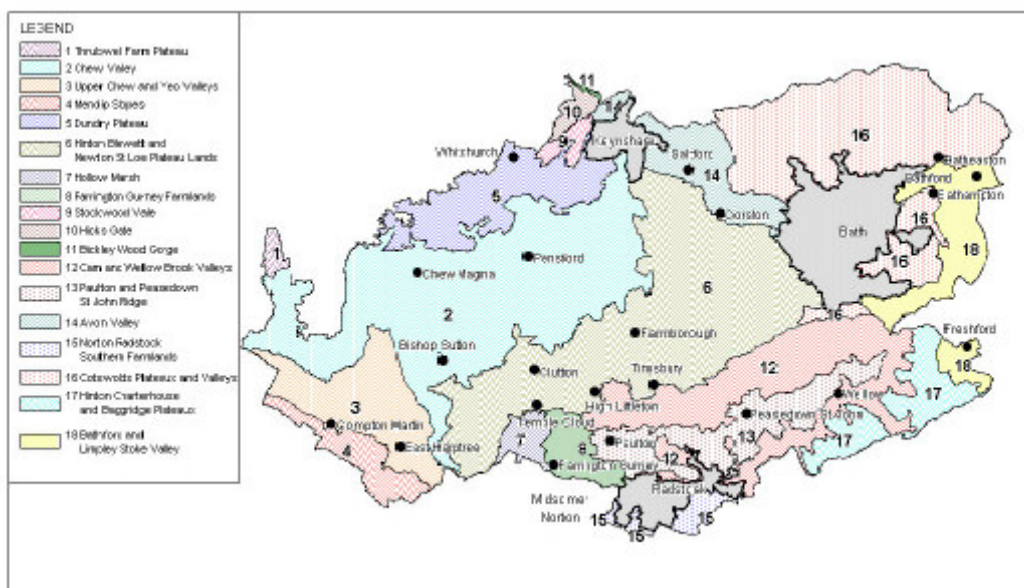


**Map 2: City of Bath World Heritage Site and Conservation Areas in Bath & North East - Somerset -**

Bath & North East Somerset's Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) is a cumulative record of all known archaeological sites, monuments and historic landscape features in B&NES. There are over 5,000 entries in the database relating to monuments and sites, and over 2,000 entries relating to archaeological investigations carried out over the past 100 years.

84 sites are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979.

Landscape Character Appraisals has been carried out following landscape assessments and landscape character areas have been identified.



**Map 3: Landscape Character Areas in Bath & North East Somerset**

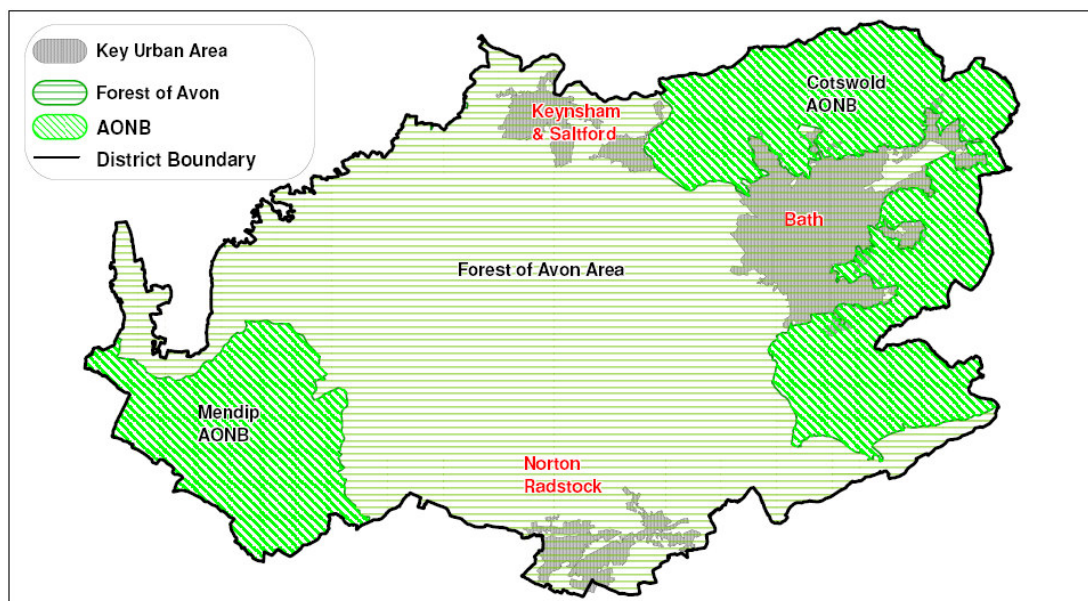
## Forest of Avon and AONB Designations

Part of the Mendip Hills AONB and the Cotswold AONB also lie within the district. Only 37% of the Green Belt is AONB designated however more significantly 82% of the AONB is within the Green Belt.

The Mendip Hills AONB was designated in 1972. Characteristic of the Mendips is the open landscape comprising steep, usually wooded slopes and a roughly undulating plateau. The hills are of Carboniferous limestone origin and thin, dry soils restrict farming with pasture and forestry dominating. Within the District are the steep, northern scarp slopes and the upper reaches of the River Chew along the Chew Valley and Blagdon Lakes.

The Cotswolds AONB was designated in 1966. Designation of the southern extension was approved in 1990 and surrounds Bath to the north, east and south largely following the Green Belt boundary. Its outstanding landscape qualities are its visual unity, its unique vernacular architecture, its reputation as a rural idyll and its immense scenic diversity.

The Forest of Avon is one of 12 Community Forests in England. When it was established in the early 1980s the boundary was drawn to encompass Bristol and a wide swathe of 'urban fringe'. It covers 221 square miles in and around Bristol. In B&NES the boundary was extended in 2006 to include the whole of the District except for those parts designated as Mendip Hills and Cotswolds AONBs.



Map 4: Forest of Avon and AONB Designations in Bath & North East Somerset

## Biodiversity

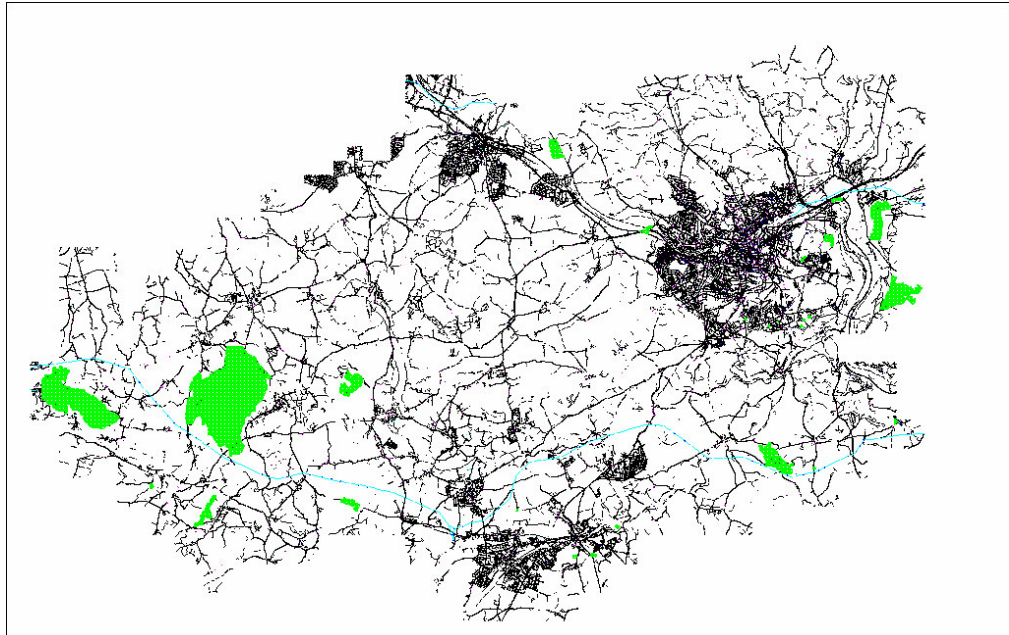
A number of sites in the District are designated for their internationally important wildlife and/or habitat; these are additionally Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

Chew Valley Lake Special Protection Area is recognised for its international importance for migrating birds and Natural England has identified a 'buffer' area around the Lake accordingly.

Combe Down and Bathampton Mines form part of the 'Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC'. Compton Martin Ochre Mine is a component site of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are areas which have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive.

Greater Horseshoe Bats are a primary reason for selection of both sites together with Bechsteins bats for the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon SAC and Lesser Horseshoe Bats for the North Somerset and Mendips Bats SAC. These bats are protected under UK law and European Directive.

SSSIs are designated by Natural England and are of national importance for their flora, fauna or geological interest. There are currently 22 SSSIs within the District.



**Map 5: SSSIs in Bath and North East Somerset**

### **Brownfield Development**

Previously-developed land, often called brownfield land, is land that was developed but is now vacant or derelict, and land currently in use with known potential for redevelopment.

The national target is that 60% of additional housing should be provided on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings by 2008. The South West region RPG10 sets a target of 50% for Bath and North East Somerset which is incorporated in the B&NES Local Plan (1996-2011).

In 2005/06, 55% of additional housing was built on previously developed land. Cumulatively, 49% of the dwellings completed during the period 1996-2006 have been provided on previously developed land.

With regard brownfield development, reference should be made to PPS23 regarding the need for appropriate assessment / remediation requirements of potential developments to ensure the protection of controlled waters.

### **Topography and Drainage**

The District is drained primarily by the river Avon and its tributaries the River Chew and the Cam and Wellow Brooks. These watercourses have floodplains which are subject to flood risk. The river valleys are a significant component of the district's landscape character, providing an important resource for nature conservation and recreation and have rich historical and cultural associations.



**Map 6: Topography and Drainage**

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provides further information on flooding, including the impact of climate change this will be published in March 2008. The Environment Agency website now has accurate information on flood zoning in the district including zone 1, zone 2 and zones 3a and 3b.

### **Development Management Context**

To give an impression of the current number of planning applications relating to replacement dwellings and extensions in the Green Belt a search of planning applications over a year period (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007) was undertaken. Replacement dwellings in the Green Belt constituted 1% (22/2563) of all planning applications in that period, while extensions in the Green Belt constitutes 5% (121/2563) of all planning applications in this same period.

An analysis of all recorded appeals between December 1996 and March 2007 shows that 8% of all appeal cases relate to replacement dwellings and extensions in the Green Belt (i.e. 71/926 appeals).

Of these appeals 20% related to Bath and only 3% to Keynsham. The appeals were predominantly related to replacement dwellings and extension in the Green Belt in rural areas. Using the settlement classification for rural settlements established in Local Plan policy SC.1: 34% of appeals related to R1 settlements, 3% to R2 settlements and 41% to R3 settlements.

The majority of these appeals were dismissed (76%), although 24% of these appeals were allowed.