

**Bath & North East Somerset
Local Plan (Core Strategy /Placemaking Plan)
Partial Update**

Options Consultation:

Executive Summary Document

January 2021

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Improving People's Lives

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL
Local Plan (Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan) Partial Update
Consultation Document (Regulation 18 of the Town and Country (Local Plan)
Regulations 2012

January 2021

Consultation from 7th Jan to 18th February 2021

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Tackling the climate and ecological emergency and addressing a housing need in Bath & North East Somerset, as well as changing the way we move around the district more sustainably, are all issues we need to consider strategically to help improve people's lives. This means we need to update and reflect these urgent issues in our current planning policies.
- 1.2 Currently the Development Plan in Bath & North East Somerset primarily comprises the Core Strategy (adopted in 2014) and the Placemaking Plan (adopted in 2017), both of which cover a plan period from 2011 to 2029. A full review of the Local Plan will be undertaken alongside the West of England Combined Authorities (WECA) Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) which is scheduled for publication in 2023. In the interim, B&NES is undertaking a Partial Update of the Local Plan to address a number of urgent issues including the climate and ecological emergency. The Options consultation document can be viewed on the council's website at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan-partial-update-options-consultation>. (Please click the website address above to open the document.)
- 1.3 The timeline for the partial update of the Local Plan is as follows:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Jan/Feb 2021 | Engagement on Options (Regulation 18) |
| Spring 2021 | Formal consultation on Draft Partial Update (Regulation 19) |
| Autumn 2021 | Submit Plan for examination (Regulation 21) |
| Winter 2021/22 | Examination hearings |
| Spring 2022 | Adoption |
- 1.4 The main purpose of this Options consultation is to encourage discussion and generate comment on the options or potential approaches for addressing some of the critical issues facing Bath and North East Somerset and we would like you to be involved in this process. The Consultation Statement including comments received on the previous stage of preparation (the commencement document) can be accessed from the council website. (Please click '[here](#)' to see the document and comments.)
- 1.5 Your comments on the Options - Please submit comments online through the consultation portal <https://consultation.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/bath-north-east-somerset/lppu-options/>

Alternatively comments can be emailed or sent to:

• local_plan2@bathnes.gov.uk

• Local Plan Consultation, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Manvers Street, Bath, BA11JG

- 1.6 Comments on the Local Plan Options document must be received by 18th February 2021.

2. Planning Policies

Climate Emergency

- 2.1 Bath and North East Somerset has declared a climate emergency and has committed to providing the leadership for the district to be carbon neutral by 2030. This will contribute to the UK's legally binding target of net zero carbon by 2050. In order to achieve this, the council is seeking to update its adopted policies on climate change.
- new policies for net zero carbon for new residential development and non-residential buildings; use of the Whole Life Carbon Cycle of new buildings; and electric vehicle charging points
 - Heat hierarchy policy requiring renewable heat while referencing the opportunities for heat networks
 - Improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings
 - Facilitating more renewable energy and providing further guidance on wind energy

Ecological Emergency

- 2.2 An Ecological Emergency has also been declared by the council in response to the ongoing threat to wildlife and ecosystems. The declaration recognises the essential role nature plays in society and the economy, and provides a statement of intent to protect wildlife and habitats, enabling residents to benefit from a green, nature rich environment. The Environment Bill 2019-2021 is currently progressing through Parliament and seeks to introduce legally binding nature, water, air and waste targets from 2022. It is proposed within the Local Plan Partial Update to include updates to biodiversity and green infrastructure policies and introduce a new policy requiring Biodiversity Net Gain within new development as well as supporting ecological networks and Nature Recovery Networks.

Universities and Student Accommodation

- 2.3 The council's preferred approach to student housing is, in principle, that future student needs are met in purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) on-campus, rather than the further conversion of family homes to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The options document sets out various policy approaches to manage HMOs and PBSA as well as opportunities to facilitate further development on universities campuses.

Industrial Sites

- 2.4 The loss of industrial sites across the district have exceeded the levels set out in the Plan, and the necessary new employment development has not yet been realised. Additionally, evidence shows that demand for industrial space has increased and is greater than was envisaged at the time of preparing the current Local Plan. Therefore, it is proposed to strengthen the protection of existing industrial land through the Partial Update.

Sustainable Transport

- 2.5 Since the adoption of the Placemaking Plan there have been some significant changed circumstances that need to be reflected in the transport policy framework. Primary amongst these is the council's Climate and Ecological Emergencies and the ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. This means that the current focus of policies on promoting sustainable travel must be further strengthened. Policies also need to be refocussed to ensure they support other transport initiatives of the Council and the wider sub-region. In summary changes to the transport policies will focus on:
- Increased recognition of the importance of the location and design in the transport sustainability of development.
 - Ensuring that development transport choices e.g. access strategy and mitigation, are required to place sustainable modes first.
 - Increased emphasis on linkages between transport, health, equality and inclusivity, creating better places, climate and air quality.
 - Embedding 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' measures and principles.
 - Updating the current status of transport schemes and issues e.g. Park and Ride, Transport Interchanges, Mass Transit, and Saltford Station.

3. Addressing Housing Supply

- 3.1 The housing requirement of around 13,000 homes from 2011 to 2029 is established in the Core Strategy. Of this requirement 7,320 homes had been built by 31st March 2020. The outstanding requirement for the remainder of the plan period to 2029 is 6,498 homes (722 homes x 9 years) using the Housing Delivery Test set by the government. Currently enough sites to deliver about 5,300 homes are identified. Therefore, there is a shortfall of around 1,200 homes.
- 3.2 The government has published its Planning Practice Guidance on 16th December and the housing supply shortfall under the government's current standard methodology is 371 dwellings (annualised requirement of 648 dwellings). The standard methodology figure is to be used as the starting point for preparing new Local Plans. However, as this is a partial update the existing Core Strategy requirement must be retained and planned for.
- 3.3 The Local Plan Partial Update therefore needs to identify and allocate sites to deliver around 1,200 homes. In doing so this will enable flexibility in delivering the Core Strategy overall requirement of around 13,000.

- 3.4 The existing spatial strategy to be used as the basis for identifying new sites directs development to the most sustainable locations in the District, minimising the need to travel especially by car and ensuring carbon emissions from transport are minimised.
- 3.5 The Core Strategy prioritises the redevelopment of brownfield sites for housing within the urban areas, and especially within Bath as the main centre in the district offering employment opportunities, an excellent range of services and facilities and relatively high levels of sustainable transport use. Keynsham is the next most sustainable location for accommodating housing within the district, given it is well linked to Bath through sustainable means of transport, including by train and a good bus service, and it has good services and facilities and an improving employment base.
- 3.6 The Options document sets out the review of current allocations and proposes new allocations to deliver the housing supply shortfall, prioritising sites in Bath and Keynsham as listed below. Further information on these sites is set out in the Options document. However, should it be shown that these sites in Bath and Keynsham cannot deliver the necessary housing the council will have to consider alternative options in other parts of the district.

Bath
Policy SB7 Green Park West and Sydenham Park
Policy SB8 Western Riverside
Policy SB10 Roseberry Place
Policy SB14 Twerton Park
Policy SB18 Bath Royal United Hospital
New allocation: Depot Site, Station Road, Newbridge
Keynsham
Policy KE2a Fire Station
New allocation: Treetops Nursing Home
Policy KE3b Safeguarded land (Policy KE3b)

4. Other opportunity sites

- 4.1 Other potential development sites mainly for non-residential development are discussed in the Options document. It comprises proposed amendments to existing site allocations, as well as options for potential new site opportunities.
- Bath Recreation Ground site allocation Policy SB2
 - The Milsom Quarter including the Cattlemarket site - seeking to create a more vibrant and diverse part of the city centre with a greater balance in the mix of uses
 - Bath Park & Ride sites - to ensure their efficient and effective use acting as a transport interchange rather than a traditional park & ride, plus potentially meeting objectives of providing waste recycling facilities, solar energy generation and nature recovery.
 - Bath Community Academy (former Culverhay School) - to be redeveloped focusing on education provision and community uses

- Western Island - to be redeveloped for industrial uses including requirements such as enhancing the ecological value of the river edge, ensuring lighting avoids harming ecological interest.
- Somer Valley Enterprise Zone – to amend the site boundary and broaden the mix of uses appropriate to be developed on site.
- Midsomer Norton South Road Car Park – to consider options of either retaining the current policy allocation for retail led mixed use development whilst also providing significant public car parking serving the new store and the town centre or remove the allocation to retain it primarily as a public car park.

5. Minor amendments

- 5.1 Section 5 shows policies that require minor modification for reasons of clarity or to ensure they accord with latest national policy or legislation.

6. Policies to be retained and with no amendments proposed

- 6.1 Section 6 lists the policies that are proposed not to be amended.