

**Bath and North East Somerset Council
Wiltshire Council**

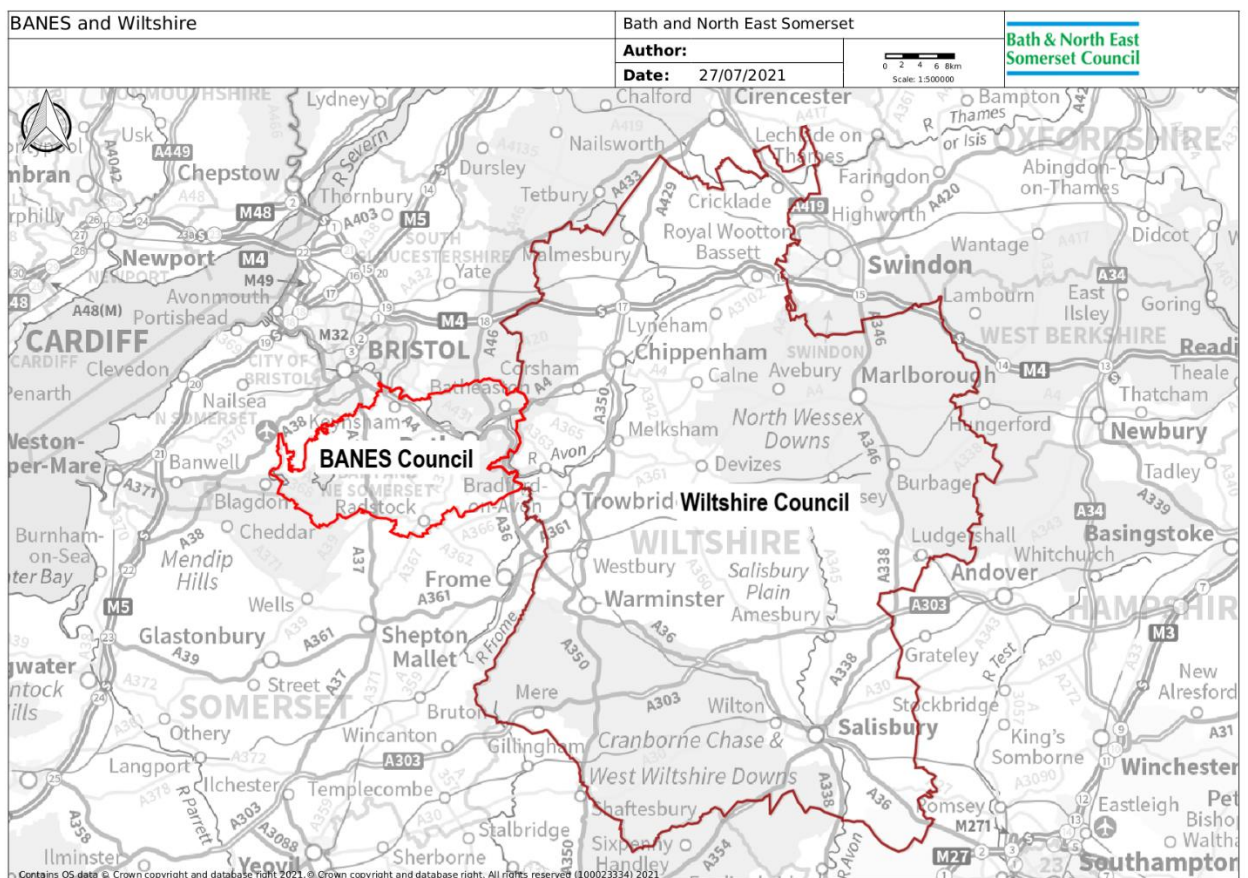
Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan Partial Update

Statement of Common Ground

August 2021

1. Introduction and Context

1.1 This statement of common ground is entered into between Bath & North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council regarding the Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU). It documents the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these as relates to the LPPU. Ongoing liaison is also taking place with Wiltshire Council on the West of England Combined Authority Spatial Development Strategy (which includes the B&NES local authority area), the B&NES New Local Plan and the Wiltshire Local Plan Review. B&NES and Wiltshire Council areas are shown on the map below.



1.2 Bath and North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council are unitary authorities and there are environmental, transport, economic and housing links between the two administrative areas.

1.3 In order to address a range of urgent issues in Bath and North East Somerset, including the climate and ecological emergency, B&NES Council is preparing a partial update of the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan (which together comprise the Local Plan). As this is a partial update to the existing Plan, and not a new Plan, the scope of the changes are confined to those areas that can be addressed without significantly changing the strategic policy framework of the adopted Plan and include: updating policies in order that they better address the climate and ecological emergencies, replenishing housing supply and addressing a limited range of other urgent local issues.

- 1.4 The current development plan documents (excluding waste and minerals) for Bath and North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council comprise the following:

Bath & North East Somerset Council	Wiltshire Council
Bath and North East Somerset Placemaking Plan (2017)	Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)
Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy (July 2017)	Chippenham Site Allocations Plan (2017)
Saved policies:	Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (2020)
Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan (2007)	West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreation DPD (2009)
	Saved policies:
	North Wiltshire Local Plan (2006)
	Kennet Local Plan 2011 (2004)
	West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration 2011 (2004)
	Salisbury Local Plan 2011 (2003)

- 1.5 There was liaison between B&NES Council and Wiltshire Council under the Duty to Cooperate as relates to the development of the B&NES Core Strategy and B&NES Placemaking Plan as evidenced by the B&NES examination documentation for the Core Strategy and Statement of Compliance with the Duty to Cooperate for the Placemaking Plan. Similarly, liaison took place in relation to the preparation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and subsequent allocation plans, and more recently on the Wiltshire Local Plan Review.
- 1.6 A full review of the B&NES Local Plan will be undertaken (B&NES New Local Plan) alongside the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) and this will need to take appropriate account of the strategic planning issues facing the wider Bristol sub-region. This will include the need to plan for additional homes, jobs, green and other infrastructure above and beyond the Partial Update and liaison will continue with Wiltshire Council on these matters.
- 1.7 Wiltshire Council is currently undertaking a review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and saved policies – known as the Wiltshire Local Plan Review. The purpose of the review is to address the future need for new homes (including market, affordable and specialist housing) and employment land over the period to 2036 and infrastructure provision over that period. The review also includes updating development management policies to ensure consistency with national policy. B&NES Council provided comments on the most recent consultation of the Plan (January to March 2021).
- 1.8 The timetable for plan-making in the two authorities are set out in the authorities' published local development schemes and those in place at the time of writing are here: [B&NES Council LDS](#) and [Wiltshire Council LDS](#)

2. Governance Arrangements

- 2.1 Cooperation in relation to strategic policy-making takes place through planning and transport officers liaison and meetings. Details of liaison in respect of the B&NES LPPU and senior officers are set out below.

Local Authority	Name (lead contact)	Role
Wiltshire Council	Georgina Clampitt-Dix (GC-D)	Head of Spatial Planning
Bath & North East Somerset Council	Simon De Beer (SDB)	Head of Planning
Bath & North East Somerset Council	Richard Daone (RD)	Deputy Head of Planning (Policy)
Wiltshire Council	Allan Creedy (AC)	Head of Sustainable Transport
Bath & North East Somerset Council	Claire Cornelius (CC)	Transport and Developments Manager

- 2.2 Record of main engagement activity

Last updated: 26 July 2021

Date	Activity log	Participation
8.1.21	Letter of engagement regarding Reg 18 Options consultation document.	RD, GC-D
10.2.21	B&NES Council and Wiltshire Council Planning Officers Meeting	SDB, RD, GC-D (also Tim McCombe, Wiltshire)
28.4.21	B&NES Council and Wiltshire Council Transport Officers Meeting to discuss transport evidence with Wiltshire Council.	CC, AC (also George Edwards, B&NES and Robert Murphy and Robert Rossiter, Wiltshire Council)
28.7.21	Consultation/liaison on Draft SoCG with Wiltshire Council Planning and Transport officers	RD, GC-D, AC
25.8.21	Letter of engagement regarding consultation on the pre-submission Draft Plan under Reg 19. This will be followed up by means of a Planning Officers Meeting.	RD, GC-D

3. Strategic Planning Matters

- 3.1 Meetings provided the opportunity for B&NES Council to update on the B&NES Local Plan Partial Update and West of England Combined Authority Spatial Development Plan and Wiltshire Council to update on the Wiltshire Local Plan Review, and to discuss strategic matters and appropriate cooperation to address them. In the LPPU [Commencement Document](#) B&NES Council outlined the purpose and scope of the

LPPU and the approach to engagement on any cross boundary, strategic issues that arise in its preparation. Wiltshire Council understands and is supportive of the approach B&NES is taking on the LPPU and whilst there are no specific concerns to date on the LPPU, dialogue will be maintained on transport issues and other implications around the LPPU.

- 3.2 In March 2019 B&NES Council declared a Climate Emergency, resolving to provide the leadership enabling the Bath and North East Somerset area to be carbon neutral by 2030. In July 2020 the Council declared an Ecological Emergency resolving to work with partners locally and regionally to drive coordinated leadership and collaborative action. Wiltshire Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019, acknowledging the climate emergency and seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.3 The B&NES LPPU will include proposed policy amendments and new policy to support the climate and ecological emergency under the Responding to Climate Change, Nature Conservation and Green Infrastructure Chapters of the B&NES Local Plan. These changes recognise the development of a Green and Blue Infrastructure strategy in Wiltshire. The Councils continue to liaise on potential green infrastructure links and ecological networks between the local authority areas to support health and well-being of communities and nature recovery in further support of the climate and ecological emergency.
- 3.4 It is proposed to take forward site allocations within the Partial Update to replenish B&NES housing supply. B&NES is looking to identify an additional housing land supply to accommodate around 1,200 new homes. In preparing the options for consultation, B&NES took account of previous discussions and accepted Wiltshire Council officers conclusion that the County is unable to accommodate any of the identified B&NES housing need, should such a course have needed to be explored. As such through the LPPU B&NES is meeting in full its identified housing need (as established via the Core Strategy housing requirement). Wiltshire Council is supportive of this approach.
- 3.5 Proposed amendments to strategic and non-strategic industrial estates policies in the B&NES LPPU emphasise the importance of local employment opportunities to support the climate emergency and encouraging sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling to work across the district. This does not raise strategic matters directly that require cross boundary co-operation. There is a need going forward however to share an understanding of any shifts in travel to work patterns. This would be a matter dealt with more squarely going forward with the WECA spatial strategy, Wiltshire Local Plan Review and the new B&NES Local Plan.
- 3.6 Proposed transport policy amendments within the B&NES LPPU reflect the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergencies and the ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. B&NES Council declared three priorities to achieve carbon neutrality, including 'a major shift to mass transit, walking and cycling to reduce transport emissions.' Proposed policy amendments focus on sustainable travel, providing genuine travel choice and reducing car dependence, all supporting a reduction in carbon emissions. There is also an increased recognition of the importance of location and design in the sustainability of development.
- 3.7 B&NES Council and Wiltshire Council transport officers met to discuss the transport technical evidence base to the LPPU including how B&NES is supporting growth in sustainable travel demand, primarily with consideration to demand within and to /

from Bath. Officers also updated that B&NES Council are drafting transport related Supplementary Planning Documents in support of proposed amendments to transport policy within the LPPU.

4. Statement Review and Update

- 4.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is an iterative document, drafted at this stage for the purposes of the B&NES Local Plan Partial Update. Engagement and discussions will also inform the preparation of the Councils' respective Local Plans. This engagement will be recorded in future iterations of the SoCG. While at this time there are no specific issues relating to the Partial Update that cannot be agreed, it will be important that discussion of cross boundary issues continue under the Duty to Cooperate and inform further development of the local authorities plans.
- 4.2 In the event that there are any changes in circumstances from those outlined in this SoCG, then these will be brought to the attention of relevant officers and any amendments will be agreed accordingly.

5. Signatories

- 5.1 This version of the statement of common ground is agreed on 26 August by Bath and North East Somerset Council and Wiltshire Council.

Signed *Simon De Beer*

Simon De Beer, Head of Planning Services
On behalf of Bath and North East Somerset Council



Signed _____

Georgina Clampitt-Dix, Head of Spatial Planning
On behalf of Wiltshire Council