

Local Plan 2020

Phase ① Issues and Approaches

Consultation Document (Nov 2020)



Contents

1 Introduction	5
Local Plan 2020	6
What a Local Plan must do	8
What must our Local Plan 2020 do	9
What's in the Phase ① – Issues and Approaches consultation document?	10
What is not in Phase ① document, but will be in the next consultation?	12
Local Plan 2020 timeline	13
Informing and supporting the Local Plan 2020	14
Context, key issues and priorities for the Local Plan 2020	15
<hr/>	
2 Setting the scene	19
South Gloucestershire today	20
Population and housing	21
Local economy, retail and tourism	22
Infrastructure and services	23
Travel and accessibility	23
Climate change	24
The main sources of carbon emissions in South Gloucestershire	24
Environment	25
<hr/>	
3 Local Plan 2020 key issues	26
Climate change	27
Our environment	28
Health and well-being	32
Exceptional places	33
Planning for urban and rural areas	35
Planning for new homes	38
Our economy	42
Travel and transport	47
Supporting infrastructure	50
<hr/>	
4 Potential priorities	54
<hr/>	
5 Strategy – Where will new development go?	59
Key building blocks and principles: informing future options and choices	61
Identifying potential building blocks	62
Building block ① existing urban areas	62
Building blocks beyond our urban areas	63
Building block ② expanding our main urban areas through small or large urban extensions	64
Building block ③ growth around our market towns	64
Building block ④ rural villages and settlements	65
Building block ⑤ large scale free standing new settlements	65
Investigating the Green Belt?	66
Developing a growth strategy: potential guiding principles	67

①	Locate new homes, jobs or settlements in places where key services and facilities are easily accessed by walking and cycling or effective public transport, or alternatively in locations where key services and facilities are capable of being provided as part of the new development	67
②	Sequential approach to building on areas at a high risk of flooding	68
③	Protect and enhance ecological, landscape and heritage designations and their settings.	70
④	Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of our Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery Networks.	71
⑤	Plan for a better balance between local jobs and resident workers in our communities	72
⑥	Ensuring that we protect a ‘sense of place and character’ when we plan for new development	73
	What happens next?	74
<hr/>		
6	Urban Lifestyles	75
	Part ① Background: why, what, where and future work	77
	Why is South Gloucestershire Council developing an Urban Lifestyles approach?	78
	What would an Urban Lifestyles development look like?	84
	Urban Lifestyles – locations and criteria	87
	Areas of focus, sites and change	89
	Part ② Urban Lifestyles suggested locations	90
	Communities of the Bristol North Fringe	90
	The challenge for the future in the North Fringe	94
	The challenge for the future of the East Fringe	100
	The challenge for the future of Yate	108
	The challenge for the future of Thornbury	112
<hr/>		
7	Creating sustainable rural villages & settlements	113
	Existing issues in our rural communities	115
	Local Plan 2020 – this consultation	118
	What do we mean by planning for small and medium scale growth in our rural communities?	119
	What about large scale growth in rural communities?	120
	Where should we investigate for growth in our rural areas?	120
	Are all of these locations sustainable and appropriate for investigation for planned growth?	122
	Investigating ‘appropriate’ small and medium-scale growth	122
	Key sustainability issues	123
	Sustainable travel for access to services and facilities	123
	Sustainability of small and rural schools	125
	Access to superfast broadband	126
	Key planning designations and considerations	126
	Flood Risk	127
	Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	129
	Green Belt	132
	Other planning considerations and issues	134
	Summary	135
	What happens next?	136

8	Planning Policies	137
	Purpose of local plan policies	138
	Our existing planning policies	138
	Local Plan 2020 – Opportunity for new planning policies	138
	Local Plan 2020 Phase ① – Planning policies	140
	Local Plan 2020 Phase ② – Planning policies	141
	Local Plan 2020 – Potential policies	141
	What are strategic and non-strategic policies?	141
	Range of potential policies	142
	Local Plan 2020 – Proposed Strategic Policies	143
	Proposed Non-Strategic Policies	145
	Proposed Area Specific Policies	150
	Deleted Policies	151
<hr/>		
	Appendix ① Summary of Green Belt options	152
	Option ① Outside the Green Belt	154
	Option ② Both inside and outside the greenbelt	156
<hr/>		
	Appendix ② Working Draft Policies	160
	Working Policy Title: Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation	161
	Working Policy Title: Energy Management in New Development	164
	Working Policy Title: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy System	170
	Working Policy Title: Creating well-designed places	173
	Working Policy Title: Parking Requirements, including Electric Vehicles	180
	Working Policy Title: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Related Development	194
	Working Policy Title: Nuclear New Build	200
	Working Policy Title: Oldbury A Station – Decommissioning	213
	Working Policy Title: Radioactive Waste	218



1

Introduction

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5

Local Plan 2020

We are developing a new Local Plan for South Gloucestershire, called the Local Plan 2020.

This Phase 1, Issues and Approaches consultation document, is one of the first steps and will inform preparation of our new Local Plan.

Producing a new Local Plan presents us with an important opportunity to

- [shape the places that we live, work and socialise in](#)
- [have a direct impact on the quality of people's lives and the natural, built environment](#)

Working in partnership with communities, developers, utilities providers and key interest groups, we will need to make choices. Choices that will need to decide where significant levels of growth - for new homes and jobs might be located and also where should be protected.

Some of these choices will lead to debate and discussions and may divide opinions.

Our choices must consider where the best connections can be made between people, development, existing and new infrastructure and the environment. We will need to build on lessons emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic and consider new ways of working, shopping and socialising. We will focus on what is important in terms of the built and natural environment and access to it, as we start to adjust to the “new normal”

As we face the challenge of Covid-19 and complete leaving the European Union, preparing a new Local Plan presents us with an opportunity for game changing and positive impacts, on enhancing our natural and built environment, our declared Climate Emergency and the ecological crisis. Our new Local Plan can also help us address the inequalities within our district, particularly those that relate to health, access to employment and educational attainment.

We shared our thinking on the development of a new Local Plan with a consultation undertaken in February 2018, as part the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP). Later in July 2019 the council declared a Climate Change Emergency and the JSP was formally withdrawn in April 2020. More recently, in August 2020 the Government released for consultation a planning White Paper. This proposes significant changes to the planning system and national policy, including potential changes to the way Local Plans are prepared and what they might contain.

It is therefore appropriate that as we set out to address the issues and challenges facing our area we look again and differently, at how we bring forward and communicate our new Local Plan,

This consultation document and the information we will share over the next few years will provide you, and everyone connected to South Gloucestershire, with an opportunity to explore the issues, opportunities and choices, that face planning the future of our area.

Some of these issues, opportunities and choices include:

- A declared Climate Emergency that we must respond to positively and proactively, informing the way we locate and design new housing, jobs and key services.
- A change in the size and ages of our population - which will require the delivery of new homes to meet identified needs of current and future residents.
- Creating a strong, clean and green economy that provides land for businesses and investment, and enhances the connectivity of people and businesses across our area.
- Planning for new development that promotes healthy and active lifestyles and creates well-designed liveable spaces.
- Our ecological, heritage and built environments which face a range of challenges and issues, and whose resilience is critical to support our plans for growth.



Solar panels being fitted to a house roof.



Person cycling, Bristol to Bath railway path.

It is important that we understand the issues that will inform and shape our approach to growth and protection, as well as the type of planning policies we might need. Because of this we have detailed and suggested priorities to address a wide range of issues that relate to the future planning of South Gloucestershire. We hope this will help build a shared understanding and knowledge of the challenges we face as we begin the process of preparing and shaping our new Local Plan. We also think that exploring the issues, potential priorities and approaches will help our new Local Plan meet future reforms to the planning system.



Economy and healthy lifestyles - The Wave. Credit: Global Shots.

We want your views on the issues and potential in this document.

If you are; a resident, a business owner, part of a family, a retired worker, aspirational about owning your first home, interested in reducing poverty, passionate about the environment, or none of these, you can help shape our new Local Plan by giving us your views.

Your opinions will help us work together and deal positively with the issues and challenges we all face. Your views will help us deliver a more resilient, sustainable and better connected South Gloucestershire as we move into the future together.

What a Local Plan must do

A Local Plan must show where new homes, jobs, new and enhanced infrastructure for walking, cycling, services and facilities should be located and developed in the future.

It also sets out safeguards and policies to protect a district's important natural assets and built environment.

A Local Plan helps make sure that new development is well-designed, built to a high quality and enhances our heritage, landscape, green and character assets.

To do this, a Local Plan includes detailed planning policies and allocates sites for growth and protection, which all future planning applications are considered against. Whether this is an application for a new business park, a development of thousands or just a single new home, or a rear extension on a listed building, all are judged against the relevant policies set out in a Local Plan.

All Local Plans are required to conform to the rules and principles set out in the government's National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)). As we produce our new Local Plan the national rules and requirements are likely to change, as the Government is proposing to make significant changes to the planning system.

Future stages of this plan must reflect these changes, but we will have to wait for them to become clearer and eventually final across the next few years.

8

The new Local Plan for South Gloucestershire must also conform with the emerging sub-regional mayoral plan, called the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), which is currently being prepared with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). As part of this we will work with neighbouring authorities to ensure the identified need for new homes and jobs for the whole area are addressed and accommodated.

What must our Local Plan 2020 do

The Local Plan 2020 will cover a 15 year period, from the date of adoption. 15 years is the current minimum period required by government rules we need to confirm with when producing a Local Plan. We are hoping to adopt in 2023, so it would cover the period 2023 – 2038.

The Local Plan 2020 will establish a new growth strategy. This will show where we should protect and where new homes, jobs and infrastructure should come forward over the 15 year plan period.

We must establish;

- How we will meet requirements for significant numbers of new homes and jobs. These will be confirmed in a sub-regional Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).
- The sites and exact location where the large scale growth of homes, jobs and infrastructure should be located and what we will be needed to support this.
- How we respond to our declared Climate Emergency to ensure growth and development support sustainability, our environment and benefit both current and future residents and businesses in our authority;
- How to retain a prosperous economy in light of Covid-19, and our changing ways and habits of working, whilst making sure there are positive impacts on our environment, economy and well-being of our communities;
- How our urban areas facing significant challenges, including town centres and high streets can change and develop to a high quality and address issues faced by residents, workers and visitors to our urban areas; and
- The range of planning policies that we will need to guide and enhance development over the next 15 years and beyond.
- How we ensure future development addresses issues like climate change through higher sustainability standards and improve health inequalities by enabling new and existing homes to be adaptable and accessible.

The Local Plan 2020 will also reflect the objectives and priorities in the adopted Council Plan and provide a spatial and place-based expression to for our aims and objectives.

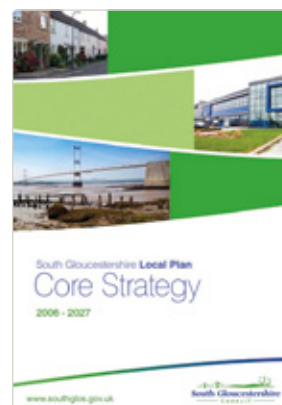
As well as the Council Plan and support from other parts of the council we will also need to consider a range of strategies from other important organisations. Together with all our partners we can make South Gloucestershire a great place to live and work, over the next 15 years and beyond. This means we can have a greater and more positive impact on:

- climate change
- health and education issues
- inequalities in our area
- and challenges faced by wildlife and our natural environment.

The Local Plan 2020 will eventually replace the adopted planning policies in the [Core Strategy 2006 – 2027](#) (adopted in 2013), [Policies, Sites and Places Plan](#) (adopted in 2017) and where appropriate policies from the [Joint Waste Core Strategy](#) (adopted in 2011).

The existing policies will remain central to effective planning, because they form the council's adopted Development Plan, which identifies appropriate areas for sustainable development and are used when determining planning applications.

These adopted document will remain in place until they are replaced by the formal adoption of our new Local Plan 2020.



Cover of adopted Core Strategy (2013).

What's in the Phase ① – Issues and Approaches consultation document?

This is the first stage of consultation. We want to discuss the issues, priorities and potential approaches our Local Plan 2020 might take to manage and guide change and growth.

By publishing this document we want to involve as many people as possible at an early stage, to raise awareness of the issues, challenges and opportunities presented by planning the future of our area.

We want to make sure that a wide range of views and opinions are taken into account as we move forward. This begins with asking you if we have identified the correct issues and priorities, which our new Local Plan should address.

We are in the early stage of considering the choices we may have, as we work sub regionally and locally to establish new strategies for growth, change and protection.

This document will begin to explore the challenges and the choices we might have, as we begin to think about a new growth strategy.

We have presented the approaches we might need to support high-quality sustainable growth and renewal in existing urban areas.

We want to explore how existing villages and settlements might benefit from appropriate levels of sustainable growth, so that they thrive well into the future. Let's begin a conversation so that we can understand what needs to be enhanced and protected, what is special and unique, if our rural areas are to grow and change.

The Phase 1 Issues and Approaches document also outlines a range of planning policies that we might need to develop and we have also included a small number of early policies for you to consider and comment on.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION
2 Setting the scene	The context of South Gloucestershire's geographical location, population, economic and environmental data.
3 Key Issues	Important issues that our new Local Plan 2020 should address and consider. We've established nine themes, which explore 55 separate issues.
4 Potential Priorities	Potential priorities that address the range of issues that face the future planning of our area. These priorities will inform the way we plan for growth, change and protection, and our future planning policies.
5 Building a Strategy	The potential building blocks and initial guiding principles, that we might use to develop choices and options as we explore how we provide large numbers of new homes and jobs, while balancing protection and enhancement of our natural and built environment
6 Urban Lifestyles	An emerging approach to development in urban areas, to improve the quality of life and the level of development on urban and brownfield sites.
7 Creating Rural Sustainable Villages	How we might approach and investigate appropriate levels of sustainable growth in our rural villages and settlements.
8 Planning Policies	The range and scope of policies we may include in the Local Plan 2020. Early drafts of a limited number of policies are presented in this section.

The government has recently finished a consultation on significant reforms to the planning system, including the way Local Plans are prepared and what must include. That consultation document is called the Planning White Paper, and it is as yet uncertain exactly what reforms will be adopted from the White Paper

Regardless of what might be required by a new planning system, we know we that we have to make tough choices in our new Local Plan 2020. Choices that include where to grow, how to provide new land for homes and jobs, where to protect and how we approach and guide development across urban and rural areas.

We think that this document, which begins to discuss the challenges, issues and potential approaches we might take, should be released before changes to the planning system and Local Plans are confirmed. We want to share the knowledge our early thinking on important issues and approaches, before we move to the later stages of making a new Local Plan.

What is not in Phase ① document, but will be in the next consultation?

When we complete this consultation, have considered your feedback and further work has been undertaken on the SDS to establish the amount of new homes and jobs we need to accommodate in South Gloucestershire, we will publish a further consultation document – phase 2 of the Local Plan 2020's preparation.

We hope to release this in in late 2021. By then the proposed changes to the planning system may be finalised. Then we can explain any new requirements and changes that need to be considered as we continue preparing our Local Plan 2020.

The next stage of preparing our new Local Plan should include an increased level of detail for the approaches, places and policies on:

- **The overall growth number of new homes or jobs we need to plan for**
– this will be established by the sub-regional Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).
- **Place based choices, options and locations for large scale growth of jobs, homes, facilities and services**
– we must first understand the requirements that come from the sub regional SDS. We must also understand the potential sites which could be developed. In future stages of preparing our new Local Plan we then begin to discuss, in more detail, the realistic choices, options and locations for growth and protection. In future stages, our consultation documents will set out options and locations for where growth could be accommodated.
- **Potential site allocations in urban or rural areas**
– we want to discuss how we approach and investigate growth in our urban and rural places in this first stage of consultation. Future consultation documents will need to become more place orientated, present potential sites in individual communities and explore the levels of growth appropriate in different places.
- **Drafts of all new planning policies**
– once we have discussed the issues which the plan needs to address and potential range of policies, we will present a greater range of draft policies at the next stage of consultation.

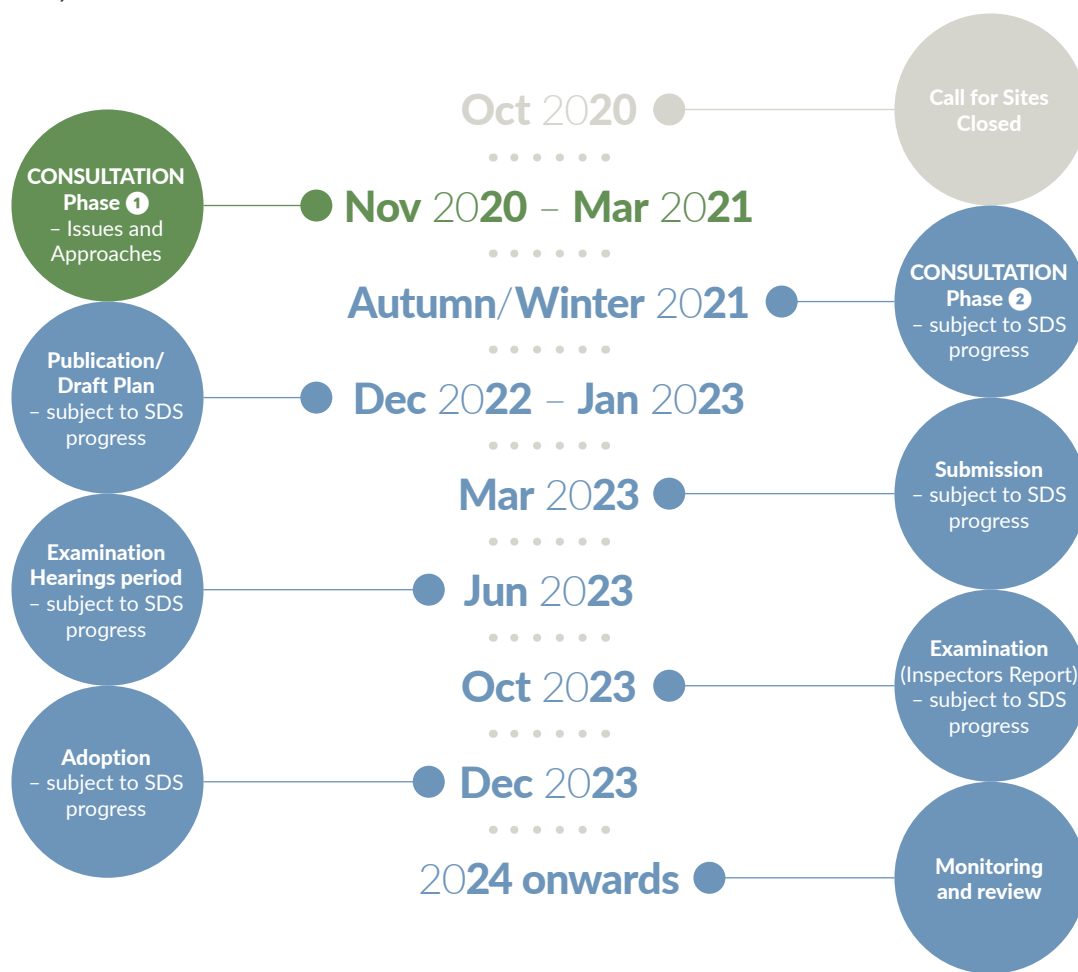
Local Plan 2020 timeline

We are in the early stages of preparing our new Local Plan and we hope to finalise it in 2023. This document is the first consultation stage in the production of the Local Plan 2020. The current Covid-19 situation will impact our ability to carry out face to face engagement on the Phase 1 document, and we expect that consultation will run into the early part of 2021.

We will consider your feedback in 2020 and 2021. The feedback we receive will influence and directly inform the next phase of our new Local Plans preparation. We then hope to conduct further consultations through 2021 and 2022. This will focus on options for growth, protection, potential sites and the opportunities this will bring to communities across the authority.

While we have a working timeline to bring forward our new Local Plan, the recent Planning White Paper consulted on proposals to change the way local plans are prepared and implemented.

As we release this Phase 1 Issues and Approaches consultation document those changes have not been confirmed. We will need to address the impact of any changes on our Local Plan 2020 timeline as detail becomes more certain and the changes are formally introduced by government. Please be aware that our timeline and future stages of preparation, are likely to alter as we move forward.



Informing and supporting the Local Plan 2020

Alongside the Phase 1 Issues and Approaches consultation document, we have also published some initial evidence that aids understanding of emerging issues, approaches and topics. This includes;

- Data & Access Profiles (DAPs);
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (Oct 2020);
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Phase 1 consultation document (Nov 2020) and

Additional key evidence under development, that will inform development of our Local Plan 2020 includes;

- Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA);
- Updated Stage 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; and
- Renewable Energy Resource Assessment Study (RERAS).
- Yate Town Improvement Masterplan; and

Kingswood Masterplan

Other key studies, evidence and supporting documents will be developed and updated as part of preparing the Local Plan 2020. These documents will be published when ready for release or consultation on our Local Plan 2020 homepage in the 'Evidence Base' section.

Evidence is also being prepared working with our West of England partners. This will inform both the West of England Spatial Development Strategy SDS and the Local Plan 2020. This includes;

- Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA);
- Employment Land and Spatial Needs Assessment (ELSNA);

More information on the SDS and related technical evidence being developed is available on the West of England website

www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/west-of-england-strategic-planning

Context, key issues and priorities for the Local Plan 2020

We want our Local Plan 2020 to have far-reaching and positive impacts.

We want it to:

- respond to lessons learnt during Covid-19
- address the Climate Emergency and ecological crisis,
- improve the quality of development and our natural environment

Our new Local Plan must make difficult choices and decisions about where in South Gloucestershire to protect and where growth and change should take place to provide for new homes, jobs and services, facilities and infrastructure.

To do this we must understand the issues that face our area and that planning can influence. We also need to understand the national and local laws and policies which govern what we need to do, and how we do it.

In the next section we establish a high level summary of South Gloucestershire as it is now.

In the Key Issues section we have set **9 Themes** which group specific issues by topic. Under each theme there are detailed issues that we think our new Local Plan should consider. They are based on what we know so far and the work the council undertakes across all its service areas.

- If, for example, you want to understand the main environmental issues facing the future planning of the area, you could look at the issues included in the “Our environment” theme.
- Many of the significant issues are cross cutting, for example climate change and health, have their own themes, but are relevant to and link to issues discussed the “Travel and transport” and “Exceptional places and spaces” themes.

To address these issues, we then have a section that suggest **potential priorities** for the Plan.

We want your views on the context, key issues, and priorities, that our new Local Plan will need to address.

To navigate and focus on the issues of interest of you – all the themes and the linked issues are set out on the next page:



① Climate change

1. Climate change mitigation
2. Climate change resilience



② Our environment

3. Conserving designated sites and buildings
4. Connecting and enhancing wildlife habitats
5. Green Infrastructure strategies
6. Severn Estuary and population growth
7. Trees loss and provision
8. Landscape assets and features
9. Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
10. Air quality
11. Flood risk
12. Agricultural land



③ Improving health and well-being

13. Opportunities for physical activity
14. Accessible health services and facilities
15. Health issues and inequalities
16. Takeaways and schools



④ Exceptional spaces and places

- 17. Impact of development
- 18. Responding to local character and context
- 19. Inclusive design
- 20. Sustainable design and construction
- 21. Optimising density and walkable neighbourhoods



⑤ Planning for urban and rural areas

- 22. Renewal and increased development in urban areas
- 23. Greenfield Land
- 24. Green Belt
- 25. New locations for large scale growth
- 26. Growth in rural villages and settlements



⑥ Planning for new homes

- 27. Identifying the amount of new homes needed
- 28. Homes to meet the needs of older people
- 29. Housing affordability
- 30. Planning for different groups
- 31. Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople communities
- 32. Issues with housing delivery on large scale sites
- 33. Five year housing land supply
- 34. Small site requirement



⑦ Our economy

- 35. Change and challenge for town centres and high streets
- 36. The amount of employment land and jobs we need to plan for
- 37. Planning for clean growth and key sectors
- 38. Safeguarded employment land left for development
- 39. Employment land lost to non-employment uses
- 40. Access to employment opportunities and need to commute



⑧ Travel and transport

- 41. Decarbonising transport
- 42. Walkable Neighbourhoods - access to key services & facilities in our urban areas
- 43. Walkable Neighbourhoods - access to key services & facilities in our rural areas
- 44. Transport infrastructure



⑨ Supporting infrastructure

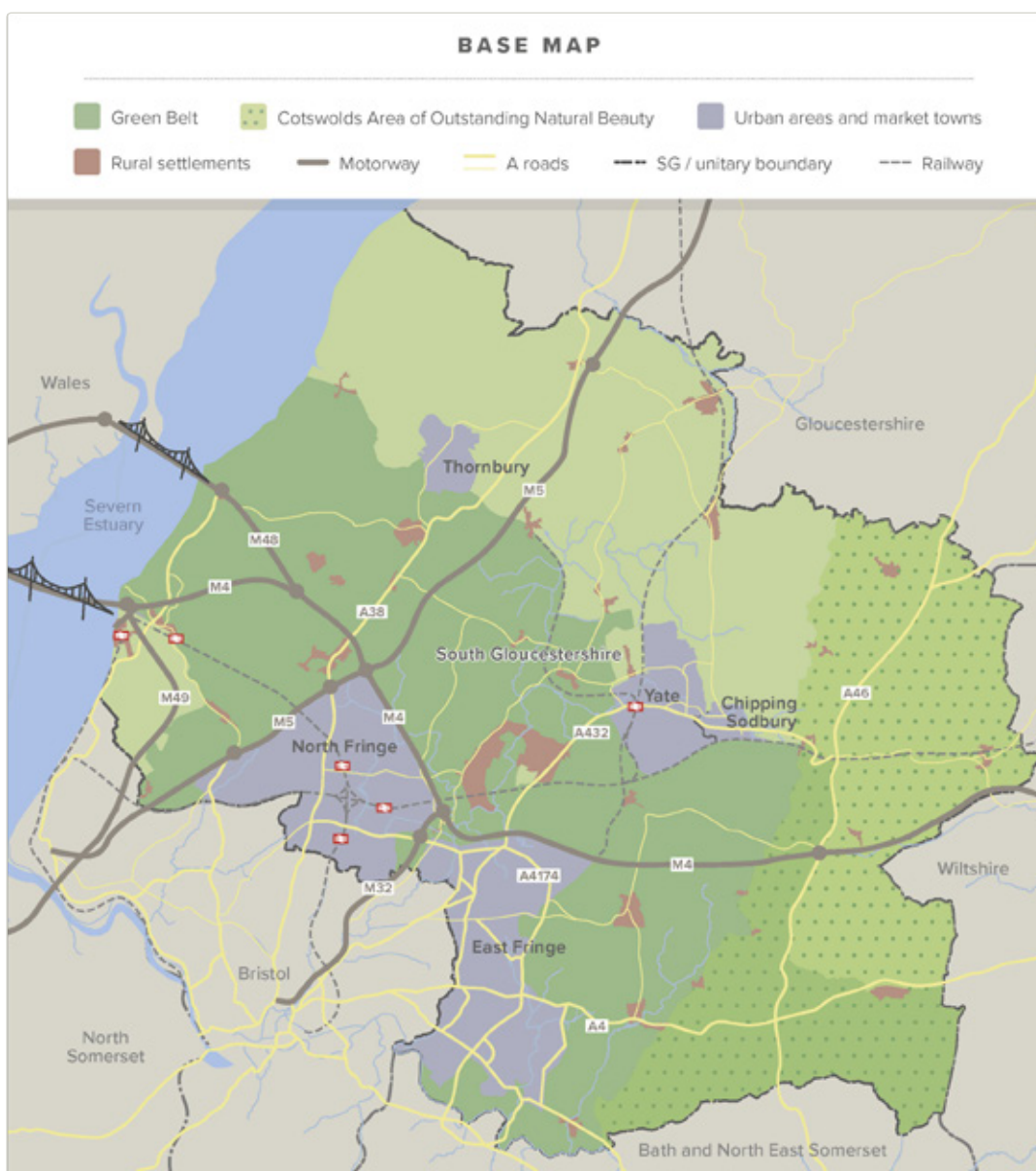
- 45. Infrastructure and new development
- 46. Broadband and digital connections
- 47. Drainage and sewerage Infrastructure
- 48. School capacity and access
- 49. Community centres and community infrastructure
- 50. Sport and recreation
- 51. Doctors surgeries and GPs
- 52. Blue light services
- 53. Waste
- 54. Minerals
- 55. Renewable energy

2 Setting the scene

South Gloucestershire today

This section gives a summary of the authority with key facts and figures which provide the context for our new Local Plan's key issues and priorities.

South Gloucestershire lies immediately to the north and east of the City of Bristol and is part of the [West of England Combined Authority](#) area¹. The area has close links with Bristol but some communities in the north and east of the authority also have functional links with places in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Bath & North East Somerset and into south Wales.



¹ The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is made up of three of the councils in the region – Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire.

Population and housing

South Gloucestershire has a population of 282,600². Around 63% of the population live in the suburban areas to the north and east of Bristol, 17% in the market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury. The remaining 20% live in the villages and rural areas of the authority.

South Gloucestershire is an attractive area which has successfully attracted and sustained investment and growth. There has been substantial population increase over the past half century with an increase of 33,500 people over the last 15 years³.

Like many other places South Gloucestershire has an ageing population, with an increasing number of older residents⁴ who have associated needs in terms of access to appropriate housing and services.

The Core Strategy looked to support sustainable growth by planning for significant numbers of new homes, jobs, supporting facilities and infrastructure on the former Filton Airfield and on greenfield land next to the urban area at Harry Stoke and Emersons Green, as well as significant growth at the market town of Yate and a small level of growth at Thornbury. These developments were planned in addition to the continued focus of redeveloping brownfield land in the North and East Fringes of Bristol's urban area which stretches from Cribbs Causeway in the north-west to Hanham in the south-east. There has been a considerable level of growth since adoption of the Core Strategy in many of these identified areas, however, some large-scale sites began developing later than expected, and others are not yet completed.

Planned development in rural areas has been based on infilling within existing village boundaries, with an opportunity to meet any additional identified local needs through rural exception sites and neighbourhood plans.

However, in recent years, there has been an increase in speculative development in market towns and villages which are outside the Green Belt. This means some larger developments have come forward on sites which were not allocated for development in the Core Strategy.

South Gloucestershire is a relatively affluent area with above average levels of employment and health overall. However, evidence shows that the inequalities gap between the most and least deprived residents has increased in seventeen out of twenty-five health indicators. This means that many people in our communities have reduced opportunities for good economic, physical and mental health and well-being. A new strategic and holistic approach to tackling inequality in our authority has been adopted and is recognised in the emerging Council Plan.

² Based on the latest (2018) Mid-year population estimate

³ Based on the latest (2018) Mid-year population estimate.

⁴ <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/2018-SNPPs-briefing-note.pdf>

Local economy, retail and tourism

The area has benefited from a prosperous, innovative and diverse economy. Our GDP in 2018 was £12,865M, ranking us 20th out of all local authorities in England and 11th outside London. The proportion of the population in employment in South Gloucestershire (82.7%) is higher than the national average (75.9%)⁵, which reflects the strong economy of South Gloucestershire and more widely the West of England. However, some parts of our area have relatively low levels of access to job opportunities. In addition, the impacts of Covid-19 on the national and local economy are challenging to predict but may have significant impacts on major employers and future economic investment in the area.

The majority of South Gloucestershire's residents work within the service sector (around 80% of working residents). There are several key employers in the authority providing manufacturing and advanced engineering roles, with major employers like Airbus UK, GKN Aerospace and Rolls Royce specialising in advanced research and development. The University of West of England (UWE) and the Bristol and Bath Science Park provide a world class environment for businesses in science and advanced technology.

South Gloucestershire has three designated Enterprise Areas; Emersons Green, Filton and Severnside, which provide employment and training opportunities across a variety of sectors and make a significant contribution to the West of England economy. In total 1266Ha of land is safeguarded in the Core Strategy for employment purposes (Policy CS12) on land both in and outside the Enterprise Areas. The Core Strategy also seeks to protect employment uses outside of safeguarded employment areas (Policy CS13).

22

There are a range of designated town centres, as well as local high streets across our authority, which provide shopping, community and leisure facilities, as well as employment opportunities. In addition, the Mall at Cribbs Causeway has the largest concentration of shopping and leisure facilities in one location. There are also a number of retail parks, the most significant are located at Longwell Green in the East Fringe, and adjacent to the Mall at Cribbs Causeway.

South Gloucestershire has an emerging profile as a cultural and tourist destination, with traditional attractions such as the National Trust's Dyrham Park and the Cotswold Way national trail and more recently developed attractions including the Aerospace Bristol Museum, Bristol Zoo's Wild Place and The Wave surfing lake. Planning permission has been approved for a significant new leisure and entertainment facility adjacent to the former Filton Airfield, a new arena and events space to serve the wider sub-region.

⁵ Employment Rate (aged 16-64), Annual Population Survey (Oct 2018-Sep 2019), ONS

Infrastructure and services

The substantial levels of new development and change over the past half century have not always been fully matched by the timely provision of essential infrastructure such as public transport, education, health, retail, open space and community facilities. Consequently access to some services and facilities is poorer in some communities than others. However, there has been significant investment in infrastructure since the Core Strategy was adopted. This includes the ongoing expansion of the Metro Bus service connecting the Science Park, the North Fringe and Cribbs Causeway to Bristol city centre and Hengrove. There have also been recent improvements to bus services to Yate and Thornbury from Bristol.

Travel and accessibility

South Gloucestershire has very good strategic road and motorway links including the M4, M5 and the M32 leading to/ from central Bristol. Mainline railways also provide strategic links to the north, south, east and west. The strategic transport network is complemented by local rail services and a local network of bus services.

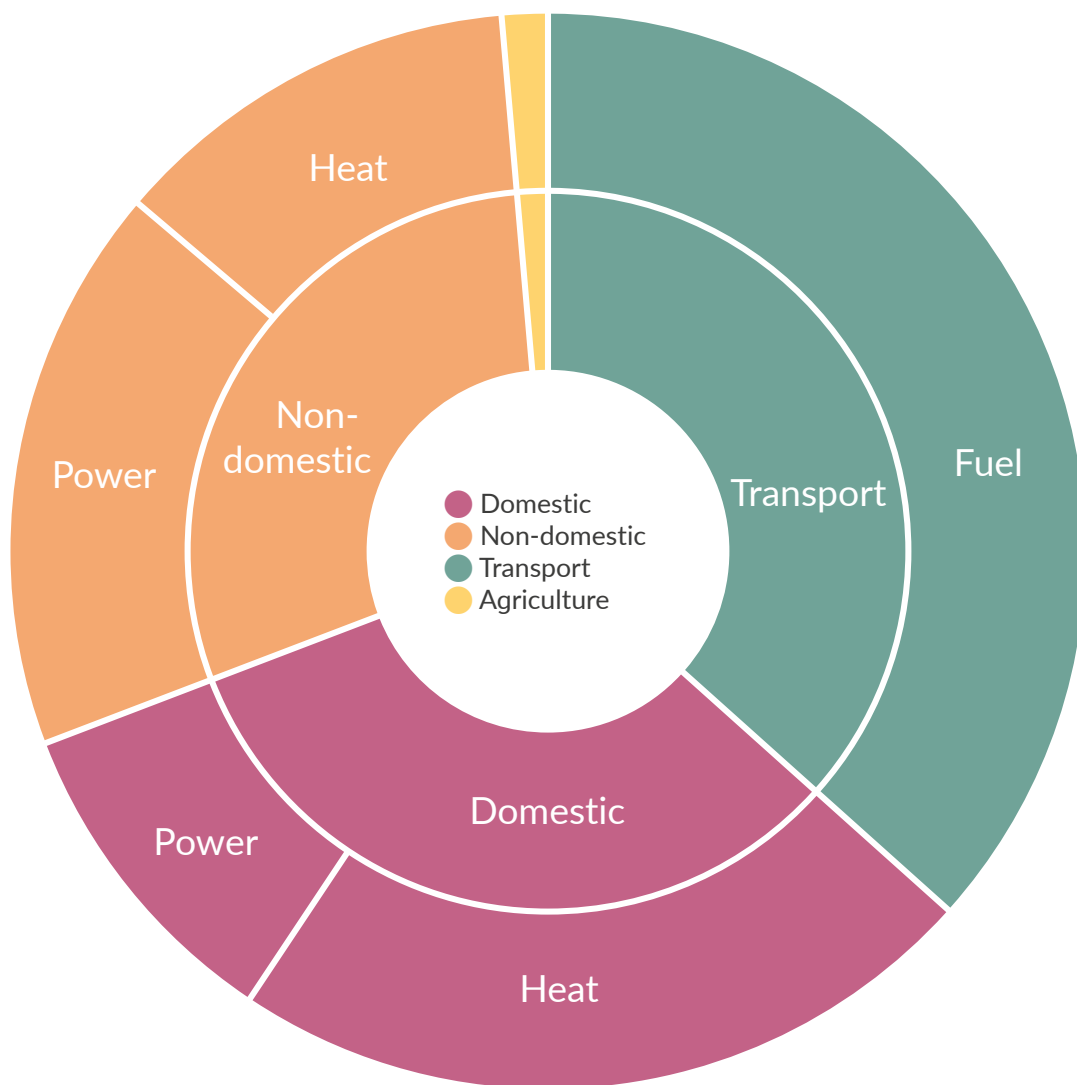
The authority has an evolving strategic cycling network, with significant stretches of dedicated cycle lanes, connecting key destinations around the North and East Fringes of Bristol and connections to Bath and Bristol City Centres via the National Cycle Network. There is an extensive network of public rights of way throughout the urban and rural areas. However, the opportunity to access key services, facilities and job opportunities by walking, cycling and public transport varies significantly across both urban and rural areas. Our cycling and walking networks are still fragmented in places and affected by barriers to movement such as major road and rail corridors. Transport schemes and policy are developed in partnership with WECA, neighbouring local authorities and delivery partners through the Joint Local Transport Plan. Transport investment has resulted in increases in the levels of walking, cycling and public transport use across the West of England sub-region. However, transport and private car use is a significant contributor to climate change. Car ownership and the number of people that commute by car remains high in South Gloucestershire, adding to congestion on parts of the strategic and local road network in peak periods.

Due to traffic pollution, air quality problems have been identified in parts of Staple Hill and at Kingswood to Warmley. As a result, these areas have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Climate change

South Gloucestershire Council declared a Climate Emergency on 17 July 2019. The overarching target is for South Gloucestershire to be carbon neutral by 2030. Scientific research⁶ indicates that climate change is occurring as a direct result of global warming, largely due to increases in greenhouse gasses caused by human actions. Energy consumption by businesses, homes and road transport are the primary contributors to these emissions. South Gloucestershire contributes slightly higher greenhouse gas emissions than the UK average per year, and significantly higher than the South West average.

The main sources of carbon emissions in South Gloucestershire⁷



⁶ www.theccc.org.uk

⁷ Source: Regen analysis of emissions from heat, power, and transport in South Gloucestershire, BEIS data for agriculture energy consumption

Environment

South Gloucestershire has a rich and varied natural and built environment. The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers 11,800ha (22%) in the east of the authority and includes a number of villages and settlements. Landscape ridges, hillsides and views frame the urban area and provide the setting for rural villages and settlements. Trees and woodlands currently cover approximately 11% of South Gloucestershire

Within South Gloucestershire there are areas at high risk of flooding, in particular an extensive area along the low-lying landscape of the Severn Estuary.

Our area also contains a high number of internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites:

- the Severn Estuary is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site due to its international importance for wildlife
- 22 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), with the most significant concentrations found near Cold Ashton and Wickwar. The Severn Estuary comprises the largest SSSI
- 271 locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) and 64 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) which together form a network of what are known as Local Sites
- 10 Local Nature Reserves
- 75 registered commons covering 1.17% of the area; and
- a diverse range of nationally and internationally important wildlife species, including bats, dormouse, great crested newts, otters and water voles

However, our wildlife habitats are under considerable pressure and are, in places, fragmented and disconnected.

Relics of historic settlements and the industrial past texture the landscape. These historic buildings, settlements, parks and gardens, and archaeological features make an important contribution to the character of the area and many are designated for protection in the planning system.

There are:

- 30 conservation areas
- 2,085 listed buildings and 1,470 locally listed buildings
- 38 scheduled ancient monuments; and
- 8 registered parks and gardens

Over 40% of South Gloucestershire is covered by the Green Belt which surrounds and separates Bristol and Bath.

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26

Local Plan 2020 key issues

We have identified 55 issues, under 9 key themes, which our new Local Plan will need to consider in planning for growth, development and change in South Gloucestershire.



Climate change

South Gloucestershire Council declared a Climate Emergency on 17 July 2019. The key risks of climate change are greater instances of flooding, increased coastal change, higher temperatures, and new pests and diseases. These impacts will affect communities, businesses and infrastructure, health, well-being and productivity, water supply (for the public, agriculture, energy generation and industry), food production, and natural capital (which includes ecosystems, soils and biodiversity)⁸. The overarching target is for South Gloucestershire to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Key issues for our new Local Plan in relation to climate change include:

1 Climate change mitigation

Becoming carbon neutral by 2030 will help slow and reduce the severity of the impacts of global warming. To do this we need to consider a number of challenges:

- a. decarbonising transport by planning for growth so that people can access key services and facilities by walking, cycling and effective public transport, to minimise the need for private car use
- b. increasing the amount of renewable energy generated in the authority by identifying sites and opportunities for new renewable energy installations of all types and the potential to decentralise the energy system
- c. ensuring that new development is built to high energy efficiency standards to minimise energy demand and incorporates renewable or low carbon heating and cooling systems, as well as renewable energy generation technology
- d. whether retention and adaption of existing buildings for new uses as opposed to demolition to reduce energy consumption, material extraction and waste, will be appropriate on some sites and in some areas.

⁸ Committee on Climate Change – UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 - link.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017>

2 Climate change resilience

Adapting to a change in climate and the impacts arising creates a different set of issues to consider:

- a. reducing the risk of overheating due to more frequent and intense heat waves, which will affect the health of users of buildings, public areas and workspaces
- b. the impact on and vulnerability of infrastructure, including transport networks, electricity distribution networks and the increased pressure on water quality and supply
- c. the increased risk of flooding associated with higher rainfall and, through increased sea levels and river flows
- d. increased pressure on the resilience of the natural environment, its landscape features, green infrastructure network, and ecosystems
- e. threats to the provision of, and access, to services

There are wider social, health, environmental and economic benefits from mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, which our new Local Plan can help facilitate. Living and working in less carbon-intensive ways increases the resilience of residents and businesses to energy price rises and energy security issues. It also provides economic opportunities for sustainable energy and environmental industries and encourages healthier ways of life. South Gloucestershire is well placed to take advantage of these opportunities drawing on its high-tech industries, strong educational establishments, varied landscapes and skilled communities. Also, our rural area and farming community presents opportunities for helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change through locally grown food production, and enabling nature recovery through extensive green infrastructure schemes.



Our environment

South Gloucestershire has a rich natural and historic environment, in both urban and rural areas. However, our environment is under increasing strain.

Long term processes of climate change, habitat loss, changes in agriculture and globalisation are causing significant impacts and changes to critical ecosystems and threatening wide-scale extinction of species. This includes loss of pollinating insect species which directly threatens food production and security. The changing climate is enabling new pests and diseases like Ash Dieback which will have a major impact on the landscape and ecology of the area. Development (which in some cases has not been designed for nature), pressure on land as well as agricultural practices have fragmented and reduced the extent and connectivity of many of our natural habitats.

We need to recognise the extent to which our current and future prosperity and well-being depends on the services we draw from the environment, often, it seems ‘for free’. However, the reality is that this resource is being depleted. Our new Local Plan needs to be ambitious, ensuring the true value of the environment in supporting our way of life is recognised.

We must establish a mechanism to enable investment in the recovery of our natural resources to flow from the development that is sustained by it.

Our historic buildings and sites are highly valued and contribute significantly to the quality of our surroundings. Some of our nationally and locally important historic buildings are at risk from redevelopment or neglect and decline. We need to make sure we have policies in place which will help protect them and enable suitable sustainable uses to come forward to maintain and safeguard these assets into the future. The key issues for our new Local Plan in relation to the environment and heritage are:

3 Conserving designated sites and buildings

A significant proportion of our authority is protected by local, national and international ecological and landscape designations, along with many protected historic sites and buildings. In line with national planning policies, we need to make sure our future plans for growth protect important designated assets and buildings from harm. We must also explore the potential of development to enhance and improve some of these assets and buildings. This will affect where we are able to direct future development and where might need to be protected.

4 Connecting and enhancing wildlife habitats

There is a need to protect and improve the connectivity and function of our wider ecological assets, like key woodland, wetland and grassland habitats. Connectivity needs to be re-established to reverse the fragmentation of these environments and to provide better links to and from our communities. This will play an important role in improving ecological resilience in our changing climate and accelerate the recovery of nature, while providing economic, health, equalities and other social benefits for local communities.

National planning policy and emerging legislation⁹ will require our plan and its policies to provide for Nature Recovery Networks and biodiversity net gain when land is developed. The Nature Recovery Networks will need to identify opportunities and priorities for enhancing biodiversity, focusing on habitat creation or improvement in those areas where it will achieve the most benefit. Biodiversity Net Gain offsets will be directed to this local network. Strategic networks for broadleaved woodland, grassland and wetland habitat have been mapped by the West of England Nature Partnership and will form the baseline for South Gloucestershire's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Nature Recovery Network.

A new scheme to conserve Great Crested Newts known as 'District Level Licensing' was launched in South Gloucestershire in March 2020. While the species is its main driver, the scheme's aim is the reinstatement and creation of a significant number of ponds across the region, benefiting a wide array of wildlife. Other mechanisms to support investment in habitat preservation, restoration and creation will also be explored.

⁹ Environment Bill expected 2020.

5 Green infrastructure strategies

The West of England and South Gloucestershire green infrastructure strategies will set out priorities, projects and areas for enhancing and protecting connectivity of ecological, landscape, access and recreational assets. This will include making connections between urban and rural areas, for people and for nature, and enhancing water quality, ecosystems and functions of our 'blue infrastructure' such as the River Frome. Through making decisions on the location and design of new development we will need to respond to these strategies, to build in green infrastructure connectivity and functions and avoid harming key sites and corridors.

6 Severn Estuary and population growth

The Severn Estuary is a site of international importance to wildlife and is protected by a number of different designations; international (Special Area of Conservation, Special Protected Area and Ramsar Site), national (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and local (Site of Nature Conservation Interest). For this reason, any proposals for development in proximity to the Severn will need to be assessed with regard to their potential to impact on the features for which the site has been designated for protection. For example, any development which increases the number of people in the area has the potential to increase the pressure put on the Severn Estuary by recreational use.

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7 Tree loss and provision

Trees, woodland and hedgerows can provide important habitats for wildlife, and create connectivity corridors to assist ecological resilience and adaptation to climate change. Access to, and views of, vegetation are also important for human well-being. The council has an ambitious target of doubling tree canopy cover by 2030. This is in addition to the need to respond to the impact of Ash Dieback, which is projected to lead to the loss of 20% of all trees in South Gloucestershire. Planning policies may need to increase the requirement to provide trees on a site and strategic scale and also mitigate the loss of valuable trees.

8 Landscape assets and features

Key landscape areas, views and local features make a significant contribution to the character, distinctiveness and quality of our area, by framing the urban areas and setting the character of rural towns and villages. These landscape areas must be protected. There are many key ridgelines, prominent hillsides and river valleys. These will inform decisions over which areas can be developed, and which areas need protection.

9 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The eastern side of South Gloucestershire is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an area of national significance for landscape quality and beauty. National planning policy¹⁰ recognises the value of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and places great importance on conserving and enhancing their landscape and scenic beauty. The Cotswolds AONB is a living, working landscape and provides opportunities for enhancing health and well-being through recreational and leisure opportunities. It may also offer opportunities to contribute to addressing our environmental and climate change priorities, including new areas for biodiversity offsetting, tree planting, green infrastructure and nature connectivity, as well as areas that are potentially suitable for renewable energy generation. As we prepare the Local Plan, we want to develop a strategy that supports and enhances the sustainability of the communities and landscapes in the AONB.

10 Air quality

Primarily as a result of traffic related pollution, air quality is a particular issue in some urban areas of the authority. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) have been declared in Staple Hill and Kingswood-Warmley. AQMAs require us to consider ways of reducing this pollution. This could be through increasing traffic management measures, requirements for less polluting vehicles and new fuel technologies, along with the design and location of new development and provision of green infrastructure.

11 Flood risk

A significant portion of the authority is at risk from flooding. This includes 22% of land that falls within Flood Zone 3 (highest risk) as well as 29% in Flood Zone 2. The main areas at risk are along the Severn Estuary which include the Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Area, the villages of Severn Beach and Pilning and a number of smaller settlements. Higher levels of flood risk also exist along the River Frome and other river corridors, including but not limited to; the River Boyd, Patchway/ Bradley Brook and Ladden Brook. National Planning Guidance requires us to direct sensitive development, like housing, away from the areas of highest flood risk, particularly as the potential risk from flooding increases with climate change. However, we will also need to consider how we can meet the long term needs of communities in areas of high flood risk and make sure they remain sustainable and can thrive in the future.

12 Agricultural land

Protecting the best and most versatile of agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) from development could have potential benefits for food supply resilience and food miles as well as local economic benefits. Food miles are the distance food is transported before it reaches the consumer.

¹⁰ National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 172.



Health and well-being

We have all faced the unprecedented challenge of Covid-19 during 2020. The outbreak has challenged our everyday way of life, our health, our work, our social relationships and our well-being. We understand that it has brought great concern to many South Gloucestershire residents and businesses for many different reasons. The Council has provided a comprehensive emergency response but we recognise that some of these issues will need additional resource and attention and a long-term economic and community recovery plan. This emergency has also led to increased partnership working, revived community spirit, and new innovative working practices. It will be important we do not lose these benefits as we 'reset' into the 'new normal'. We firmly believe that with the help of our communities, we can work together to ensure the swiftest and most prosperous recovery phase in South Gloucestershire possible.

Key issues for our Local Plan to consider in relation to health and well-being are:

13 Opportunities for physical activity

Physical activity, including children's play, walking and cycling, formal and informal sport, gardening, growing food and community activities and open spaces, have a major positive impact on people's health and mental well-being. The plan will need to consider how people of all ages and abilities access a wide range of spaces and facilities, so that everyone can benefit from being active.

14 Accessible health services and facilities

It is important that our health services and facilities are accessible to the whole community regardless of age and ability. The facilities should be particularly easy to use for elderly people, those with disabilities, and on low incomes in terms of their location, connectivity by public transport and design.

15 Health issues and inequalities

Residents of South Gloucestershire are generally healthier and have a better life expectancy than the national average, reflecting the relative affluence of the area. However, there is an upward trend in chronic diseases, which have a big impact on quality of life, partly due to the increases in the elderly population and an increase in child and adult obesity. Poor air quality has a direct effect on health, and traffic related pollution is an issue in parts of South Gloucestershire. There are also pockets in the authority that are recognised areas of deprivation and where evidence from a range of measures show that residents experience social deprivation and lower life expectancy.

16 Takeaways and schools

South Gloucestershire's Healthy Weight Obesity Strategy¹¹ sets out the desire to restrict the number of fast food outlets (takeaways) in communities, especially near schools, due to rising levels of childhood obesity and the impact this has on well-being and inequalities in our area. The plan will need to take account of, and support, strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all, especially children. New planning policy requirements and other planning mechanisms will need to be explored, to control the number of takeaways that are located in close proximity to our schools.



Exceptional places

High-quality, well-designed places have a significant and positive influence on the quality of our lives. The quality of a place can affect our health and well-being, feelings of safety and security, inclusion and belonging, and our sense of community cohesion. National planning guidance has an increasing focus on delivering design quality in new development. The key issues for the Plan in addition to creating well designed places and spaces are:

17 Impact of development

Development must consider its impact on existing natural and built assets. It must balance the provision of enhanced and new multi-functional green infrastructure, walking and cycling infrastructure, with the provision of new homes, jobs, transport links and the new public spaces and places that we will need over the next 15 to 20 years.

18 Responding to local character and context

To make sure that future developments enhance the quality of our built environment, new policy requirements and guidance will be needed so that development creates locally-distinctive and well-designed buildings, green infrastructure, open spaces and places that enhance or create local positive character.

¹¹ <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/Healthy-Weight-Obesity-Strategy.pdf>

19 Inclusive design

Due to both an ageing population and the need for new homes to be adaptable for a variety of potential users, family units and changing activities carried out in the home, “inclusive design principles” will be needed. Our planning policies will need to make sure homes are built which can adapt to people’s changing needs by providing standards for minimum levels of space and a larger proportion of dwellings which are fully accessible.

We will also need to make sure that we provide a variety of house types and sizes. These house types should suit a range of households and income levels and include a ‘tenure-blind’ distribution of affordable housing. If we do this, we will create more diverse, mixed and well-balanced communities.

20 Sustainable design and construction

Making sure that the quality of design and delivery of future growth is of a very high standard takes a considered approach to:

- the use of materials and construction
- energy efficiency
- using sustainable building materials and approaches
- minimising impact on water quality and quantity
- resilience to a changing climate

This will require new design criteria and mechanisms to raise the standard of design, construction and development across South Gloucestershire.

21 Optimising density and walkable neighbourhoods

Increasing the amount of development in urban areas will need to balance providing more new homes with providing high-quality private and communal spaces and public realm as well as a high quality living environment for existing and future residents. This will support healthy, low carbon, sustainable lifestyles by creating walkable and cycleable neighbourhoods near to key services and facilities. This will likely require new, locally specific design policies and approaches.



Planning for urban and rural areas

South Gloucestershire is an area of both urban and rural communities. Our new Local Plan will need to consider:

- where to locate significant numbers of new homes, jobs and infrastructure
- how this balances across our urban areas and brownfield sites, rural and greenfield areas
- the potential role of the Bristol and Bath Green Belt

Issues to consider in making these difficult decisions include:

22

Renewal and increased development in urban areas

The new Local Plan will need to set guiding principles to inspire and support the regeneration and diversification our town centres and urban areas, so they are fit to serve communities well into the future. Updates to national planning policy require better use to be made of available brownfield land. Brownfield land is land which has previously been built on or developed, that is mostly located in our urban areas.

This means, in the future, we will need to optimise the density of development on brownfield land in urban areas particularly where sites are in close proximity to key services, facilities, public transport and train stations. However, increasing the density of development (including homes, jobs and infrastructure) creates challenges for the existing urban areas of South Gloucestershire:

Quality of life in urban areas

The experience of residents during the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of good quality homes and access to open spaces, key services and facilities. The pandemic has also highlighted the inequality of access to these benefits across South Gloucestershire. Any increase in urban development will need to balance providing more new homes with providing residential amenity, setting a minimum level of internal space standards, high-quality private amenity spaces, good quality public spaces and good walking access to key services, facilities and open spaces.

Design issues

Increasing the amount of development in urban areas will require new policies and approaches to current 'place-making' standards including design, parking, good quality accessible open space, green infrastructure and provision of additional services and facilities, to ensure that urban development is not at the expense of quality of life and quality of the environment.

Loss of employment land

The continued focus on redeveloping brownfield sites in our urban areas can place additional pressure on existing employment land. Issue 40, shows that levels of out-commuting, deprivation and loss of employment land is particularly acute in the East Fringe. Balancing the need for new homes on brownfield sites in urban areas with the need to ensure all communities have sustainable access to employment opportunities, will be a challenging issue for the plan.

Viability issues

There are a range of factors that can impact on whether a site will be delivered. Issues such as site contamination from an existing/previous use, design and amenity issues, levels of parking required and open space, as well as affordable housing requirements can all impact the delivery and “viability” of significant development in urban areas and on brownfield sites.

Heritage and ecology

Some brownfield sites and urban areas will contain historic buildings, archaeology or areas of wildlife and biodiversity interest which will need to be protected and influence how and where we plan to develop in urban areas.

23 Greenfield land

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Much of the land surrounding our urban areas, towns and our rural villages and settlements is “greenfield”. Greenfield is not a planning designations that we put on a map. It simply means land which has not previously been built on or developed. This can include parks and greens in urban areas, but is mostly open land and land in agricultural and forestry use in rural areas, some of which is also Green Belt and in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The opposite of greenfield land is brownfield land. It is important to note that there is difference between greenfield and Green Belt land, which is explained a little more in the issue below.

Whilst our new Local Plan will need to have a focus on development of urban areas and re-use brownfield land, there is a limited amount of this land available for new development. It is unlikely that all future needs for jobs and homes can be met in this way without significant negative impacts on the quality of life, economy and sustainability in our urban communities. Development of greenfield land and sites will most likely need to form part of the strategy for growth in homes, jobs, facilities, and services.

24 Green Belt

Over 40% of South Gloucestershire is covered by Green Belt planning protection. The main aim of Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl and keep land open. National policy sets out clear role and purposes for land that is protected as Green Belt.

In our area the Green Belt separates Bristol and Bath, surrounds the North and East Fringe urban areas, and runs as far as Yate and Thornbury. Over the last half century it has been successful in preventing the main urban area sprawling and merging with surrounding places such as Winterbourne, Coalpit Heath, Yate, Pucklechurch, Wick and Bitton.

It is important to note that Green Belt is not given planning protection because of landscape or ecological quality, or because areas of land have open space and recreation function. High-quality landscapes, important habitats and open spaces used for recreation, both in the Green Belt and outside are protected by other national and local policies.

Our new Local Plan is the main opportunity to consider whether changes should be made to the Green Belt in our area. National Planning Policy requires all Local Plans to demonstrate that brownfield, urban and non-Green Belt land has been explored prior to making changes to the Green Belt. In preparing our new Local Plan we need to consider the following issues in relation to Green Belt:

- many of our villages, rural communities and land which currently have higher levels of walking, cycling and effective public transport to key services and facilities, are located within the Green Belt close to the existing urban areas. The market towns of South Gloucestershire are also partially surrounded by Green Belt designation
- balancing the need for new homes, jobs, services and facilities with the need for sustainable development (particularly becoming carbon neutral in line with the climate emergency), may require areas of Green Belt to be investigated for both large and small scale growth
- a wide range of environmental, landscape and heritage assets and designations cover land both within and outside the Green Belt in South Gloucestershire. Along with consideration of flood risk, this may restrict the level of growth that can occur in some locations. For example many areas outside the Green Belt are within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- whether some areas would benefit from extensions to the Green Belt
- developing other options for protecting area of open countryside which communities cherish and help us develop Strategic Green Infrastructure corridors.

25 New locations for large scale growth

National Planning Policy sets out that where large numbers of homes and jobs are required, the need can often be best met through larger scale development, including new settlements and urban extensions to urban areas, towns and villages¹². Locations for very large sites to provide for new homes, jobs and facilities will require the investigation of land and locations outside the urban area on greenfield sites in appropriate rural areas. This may need to consider locations currently designated as Green Belt. Planning for large scale developments will require consideration of many of the issues set out in this document, including:

- large scale growth locations need to be sustainable to avoid increasing issues which contribute to climate change, particularly through increasing a reliance on private car journeys to access key services and facilities. Everyday needs, such as key services and facilities including employment and education, should be provided for within the development, or available in close proximity, so that they can be accessed by walking or cycling and, if travel is required, by effective public transport

¹² National Planning Policy Framework Para 72

- inspirational ideas for new settlements and/or long-term landowner delivery models that support necessary employment and infrastructure, and make efficient use of the land, may be necessary to deliver large scale growth.

26 Growth in rural villages and settlements

Our Core Strategy allowed for infilling within existing village boundaries but did not allocate any additional sites for planned growth in our rural villages and settlements, beyond the market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury. In recent years, unplanned speculative development has put pressure on the character and some services and facilities in some of our villages and settlements without fully understanding of the needs and requirements of these rural communities.

Rural communities have more older people, a growing affordability gap between local incomes and house prices and can lack certain housing types/ tenures especially smaller market and Affordable Homes. These issues can cause difficulties for younger people who wish to remain in or move to an area. Rural exception sites providing Affordable Housing for local people have been difficult to deliver due to the unavailability and high 'hope' values of suitable land. However, well planned and appropriate development could increase housing choice, provide different types and tenures of housing, including Affordable Housing and shared ownership homes, as well as increase support for key local services and facilities. Some of our rural communities are also digitally connected but connection quality and speeds vary both across the authority and within individual communities.

Our Local Plan will need to consider whether as a principle, every community should be able to grow in a planned, sustainable way over the next 10, 15, 20 years and beyond, to help safeguard or improve the long term vitality and viability of that community.



Planning for new homes

The population of South Gloucestershire is projected to increase at a faster rate than has been experienced in the recent past, increasing by 16% over the next 15 years¹³. We will need to plan for the right number and type of new homes to meet the needs of this growing population. The new Local Plan will not only need to provide a strategy and sites for the required number of new homes, it will also need to ensure the location and sites allocated can be delivered effectively and in a timely manner.

Key issues for our new Local Plan in relation to meeting the requirement for new homes include:

¹³ 2018 based subnational population projections (2018-2033), ONS.

27 Identifying the amount of the new homes to plan for

The Local Plan will need to provide land for a minimum number of new homes over a 15 year plan period. It will do this by allocating sites and by balancing policies for growth and protection. The method to establish the number of homes required in South Gloucestershire is set out in national planning policy.

The starting point is a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) to establish the housing needs of the area. This involves a number of steps;

1. Using the government's current standard methodology, we establish how many new homes need to be provided in South Gloucestershire each year. At the time of writing (October 2020) this is at least 1412 new homes a year.
2. We then need to establish out how many homes this would be over our proposed plan period, from 2023 to 2038. Using the current standard methodology figure this is 21,180 new homes over 15 years (1412 x 15)
 - The government is currently consulting on changes to its standard methodology—so it's likely that as we prepare our new Local Plan the number of homes we need to provide each year and over a 15 year period, will change.
3. We would then establish how many homes have existing planning permission, and are likely to be built, after our new Local Plan is adopted, we hope to adopt our Plan in 2023. We remove these homes, from the number we have to find.
4. This establishes our starting point for how many new homes we need to find over the 15 years plan period
 - If the plan period changes, for example to 20 years or 10 years, the number of homes we would need to find would change.
5. However, from this starting point we will also need to consider any sub-regional needs for new homes that might need to be accommodated in our area. The total number of new homes which our plan will need to provide will then be set out in the emerging West of England, Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).

South Gloucestershire is part of the West of England Combined Authority. This means we will also need to work with the constituent authorities to help ensure housing needs across the sub region are met. We will need to discuss with neighbouring authorities, through the Duty to Co-operate, whether any element of housing need will need to be, or can be, accommodated across administrative boundaries. South Gloucestershire's own housing target as determined by the standard methodology above is therefore only a starting point and will be moderated through being part of the West of England Combined Authority and through cross boundary discussions and confirmed in the SDS.

We will also need to ensure our land supply is resilient and that we can demonstrate that we can maintain a five year supply of housing (please see issues 32 and 33).

28 Homes to meet the needs of older people

The number of people over 65, and over 85, in South Gloucestershire is expected to grow by 14,600 (+28%) and 4,300 (+61%), over the next 15 years¹⁴. This means more purpose build, specialist homes and a wider choice of accommodation for this age group will be needed. Ensuring that a larger number of new homes are adaptable and accessible will help to ensure that all ages can utilise housing over the lifetime of the building, providing one option to people to live independently and remain in their community as they age. A potential impact of the Covid-19 crisis could be an increase in demand for residential annexes to provide living accommodation alongside existing homes, as an option for people wanting to look after elderly or disabled relatives at home.

29 Housing affordability

House prices and rental values have risen over the last 10 years, compared to incomes. This has led to an affordability ratio of income to price of 8.8 in South Gloucestershire, compared to 3.7 in 1997¹⁵. Many people are now unable to rent or buy homes on the open market. There is a need both to stimulate the provision of “affordable” market housing to bring the aspiration of home ownership back within wider reach and a need to set planning policies to ensure that the cost of Affordable Housing¹⁶ delivered through the planning process is affordable to households who are unable to meet their housing needs in the open market, in accordance with local incomes, house prices and rents. The need for Social Rented housing remains high in all areas despite improving delivery of new Affordable Homes in recent years

30 Planning for different groups

A Local Housing Needs Assessment will identify the needs of the various groups in South Gloucestershire, including those who need Affordable Housing, families with children, service families, older people and people with disabilities. We will also need to assess the needs of the following groups:

- essential local or key workers have been included in the national policy definition of Affordable Housing. The importance of this group has been highlighted by the Covid-19 crisis
- new specialist accommodation to contribute to increasing the supply and options available to students. A policy approach may be required to help to ensure homes built or converted for multiple occupation are suitable and that clustering does not adversely affect the overall character of a neighbourhood
- self-build and custom housebuilding contributes to greater housing choice and can encourage housing innovation which can offer a lower cost housing option. Community-led housing such as Community Land Trusts (CLTs) can provide a housing alternative for local communities

¹⁴ 2018 based sub-national population projections, ONS (2018-2033)

¹⁵ ONS: Housing affordability in England and Wales 2019
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2019#housing-affordability-data>

¹⁶ Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market

31 Gypsy/Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities

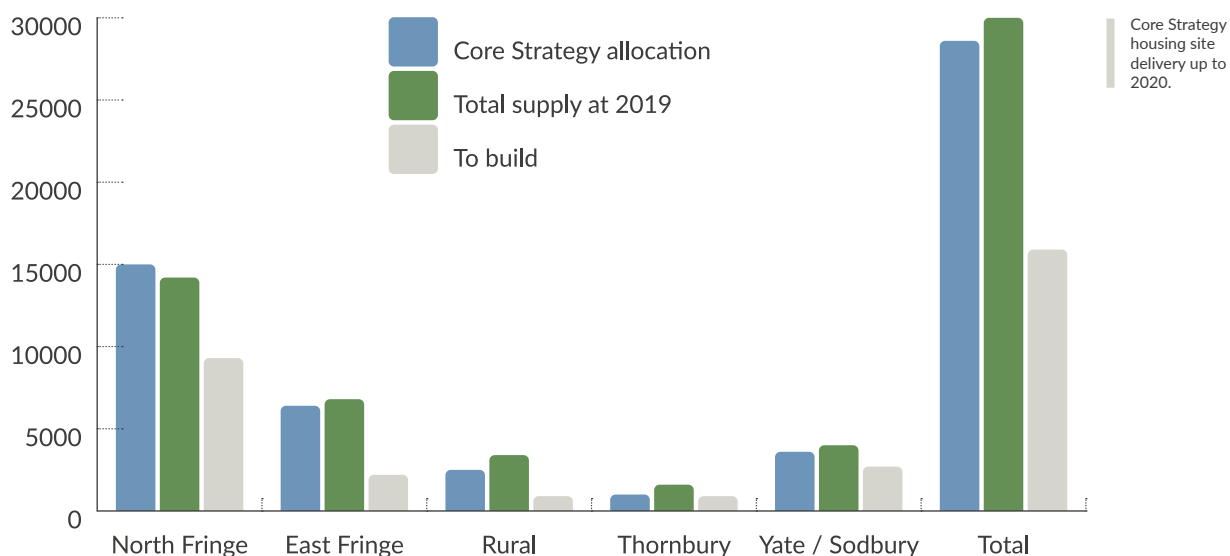
There has historically been a sustained level of unmet need for Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in South Gloucestershire. Our refreshed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) will set out the level of need.

It is important that the Council plans to meet these needs in a manner that reflects the characteristics of the local Travelling community and their ‘nomadic habit of life’ through the allocation of appropriate new sites. The Council will also seek to protect existing, authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites until such time that it can be proven there is no longer an outstanding need for such sites.

In order to reduce the number of unauthorised encampments in the area, the council is also looking at the possibility of providing transit provision/ temporary stopping places, to provide emergency, temporary accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers.

32 Issues with housing delivery on large scale sites

The Core Strategy planned for a number of large-scale housing developments in the urban areas of the North and East Fringes of Bristol and in Yate. However, the planned developments have not been built out to the expected timescales due to a range of issues including landownership and infrastructure delivery. This has made it harder to maintain a 5-year housing land supply than might otherwise have been the case, if the same amount of housing had been allocated on a wider range of smaller sites. One result has been that in recent years, there has been an increase in speculative development in market towns and villages which are outside the Green Belt. This is not a new problem: our housing trajectory in both the Core Strategy and our predecessor local plan, despite being based on information provided by developers and housebuilders, have proved consistently over-optimistic about the rate of housing delivery. We need to ensure our new plan sets site build out rates at a level that we are confident will actually be delivered.



As delivery of large scale development has ebbed and flowed, there has been an increase in speculative development to meet short term needs (5-year housing land supply), and consequently the supply of the housing around Thornbury and elsewhere in rural areas has increased beyond that allocated in the Core Strategy.

33 Five year housing land supply¹⁷

There is a need to ensure land allocated in the plan will lead to a steady supply of new homes being delivered, and help the authority maintain a 5-year housing land supply. Delivery and build out, particularly of large scale sites, with significant amounts of infrastructure or multiple land ownerships, has often taken longer than planned to start delivering.

To build resilience into our housing supply the Local Plan 2020 will need to consider a portfolio of sites. In terms of; size and locations, and avoid reliance on a few large sites, which can be subject to delays in delivering

- there will also be a need to consider a range of ownership and delivery models to supply housing to avoid an over-reliance on a small number of developers and very large sites in one area
- The Council and other public authorities may need to consider how it can lead and facilitate land assembly and infrastructure delivery

42

34 Small sites requirement

National planning policy now requires that 10% of all Local Plan growth should come from sites no larger than one hectare¹⁸. Our new Local Plan will need to consider how we approach and meet this requirement.



Our economy

Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, our economy has continued to change and evolve with the expansion of the internet and wider global supply chains. This has had major implications for our town centres and high streets. The way many businesses operate and their requirements for offices and business premises (for example the distribution and logistics sector) has changed, as have their operating business needs. The country also now has the very significant challenge of ‘rebooting’ the economy post Covid-19. This will require innovation and creativity to regain economic productivity, achieve the decarbonisation targets set in response to the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency and mitigate the potential negative effects on key employment sectors in South Gloucestershire, like aviation.

The key issues to consider in preparing our new Local Plan in relation to the economy are:

¹⁷ Glossary/Explanation - The NPPF at para 73 requires all local planning authorities (LPAs) to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements.

¹⁸ NPPF Para 68a.

35 Change and challenge for town centres and high streets

A national decline in the amount of shop and retail floorspace and the continued rise of online shopping requires us to reconsider the purpose of our town centres and high streets. These changes have been magnified by Covid-19, which is also impacting leisure, entertainment, food and drink businesses. Our Local Plan will need to consider how flexible policies can be developed to support the repurposing of our town centres and high streets, as they look to remain attractive to investment and useful hubs for local communities over the next 5, 10, 15 years and beyond:

- there has been an increase in vacancy rates of shops in some town centres, particularly Kingswood and Yate
- national planning policy encourages a more diversified approach to town centres and high streets to encourage dwell time, footfall and leisure activity.
- future high streets need to be diverse, encouraging a wider array of facilities such as leisure, culture, community uses, health facilities, education facilities, food and beverage units and other types of employment uses
- provision of new residential accommodation in town centres can drive investment, increase footfall and activity and will become more common within our town centres and high streets. However, this needs to be designed and delivered in the right way to avoid harm to residents and the other users of town centres for shopping, businesses and activity
- there is a need for coordinated regeneration, investment, new uses and development within and around our town centres and high streets, to ensure they remain viable and adaptable for businesses to serve the changing needs of local communities in the future
- integration of high-quality public realm and green infrastructure within town centres and high streets has multiple benefits. It can play a key role in improving visual amenity, safety, biodiversity, air quality, shading, and cooling, as well as the combined health and well-being benefits which will help increase the time people spend in our town centres and high streets

36 The amount of employment land and jobs we need to plan for

Our new Local Plan will be required to provide and safeguard land for employment generating uses which will be balanced against the need for new housing. This will be done by protecting employment sites that are important for the local economy over the plan period, and setting out land for new sites. This will require new evidence including:

- a regional Employment Land and Spatial Needs Assessment (ELSNA) is being undertaken to determine the wider Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) for the West of England area that will inform the SDS. This is done sub-regionally to ensure that the employment needs (for businesses and residents) are met, that the area continues to prosper and is resilient to sudden changes. The ELSNA study will set out the amount of land needed to accommodate future economic growth

- a more geographically focused Employment Land Review (ELR) for South Gloucestershire will be required. This will assess the existing quality and quantity of employment land within the authority - focused on our existing safeguarded employment areas

37 Planning for clean growth¹⁹ and key sectors

South Gloucestershire benefits from a prosperous economy, but must continue to provide and safeguard sufficient employment land for the needs of existing and new businesses. Key sectors and business clusters including the aerospace and advanced engineering industries, UWE, distribution, manufacturing and service industries and our emerging TEC ARC²⁰ area, will have changing needs and demands into the future. Our Local Plan will need to understand these needs to plan effectively for long term sustainable growth. Key business and economic drivers which will influence our strategy include:

- the West of England [Local Industrial Strategy sets out that industrial development in the West of England should be based on inclusive and clean technologies](#), whilst also ensuring that productivity remains strong so the region creates high quality, well-paid jobs
- in response to the climate change emergency, we need to plan to increase renewable energy generation, providing land and sites for renewables.
- we also need to maximise the opportunities for the local economy to benefit from new green technologies
- a better understanding of the supporting infrastructure, whether that is transportation, digital connectivity, type of new homes, skills or leisure and commercial facilities - that our existing businesses need in order to flourish, grow and stay in South Gloucestershire
- South Gloucestershire hosts an existing nuclear power station that is being decommissioned, as well as a nationally nominated site for a new nuclear power station. We therefore need to plan for proposals for change and/or reuse at the existing site, and for a potentially significant construction project. This will involve an influx of thousands of construction workers, potential related economic development opportunities and a need for offsite associated infrastructure

¹⁹ Clean Growth is defined as growing the UK's national income whilst cutting greenhouse gas emissions in ['The Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a low carbon future'](#)

²⁰ TEC ARC is short for 'Technology, Enterprise and Connectivity delivered by Academia, Research and Commercialisation', which is a concept that spans from Emersons Green Enterprise Area to Filton Enterprise area via the University of the West of England, to the M4/M5 interchange. It is a magnet for deep tech and innovation supporting high value R&D, scale-ups and large employers to collaborate locally to generate global impact.

38 Safeguarded employment land left for development

There is not a great amount of undeveloped employment land remaining in South Gloucestershire.

The majority of this land (226 hectares – 36% of the original allocation) is at Severnside. It is likely that our new Local Plan will need to provide more land for employment purposes, to allow existing and new businesses to invest and grow within the South Gloucestershire.

	Safeguarded employment land left for development (Ha)	
North Fringe of Bristol	12	3%
East Fringe of Bristol	3	2%
Yate & Chipping Sodbury	0	0%
(North Yate New Neighbourhood)	6.7	100%
Thornbury	0	0%
Rural Area	0	2%
Severnside	226	36%
TOTAL	249	20%

Safeguarded employment land left for development (ha).

Source: SGC ELAS monitoring.

Furthermore, there will be a need to assess existing safeguarded employment sites for their suitability to be redeveloped to incorporate more flexible and adaptable uses (where possible), to ensure that the needs of businesses are met for the plan period. We will need to plan for both the overall quantity and type of employment land to be available, but also ensure that it is in the right location which will best support employment growth and the overall strategy of the Plan.

39 Employment land lost to non-employment uses

Employment sites across our urban areas have been lost to other uses, particularly housing. Whilst this has helped to provide new homes, it has led to the loss of land for business and jobs. The loss of safeguarded employment land has been particularly noticeable in the East Fringe – with the loss of nearly 17ha of land from employment uses.

	Land Safeguarded in Core Strategy (Ha)	Safeguarded Land (Ha) lost to non-employment uses
North Fringe of Bristol	355	9.82
East Fringe of Bristol	147	16.99
Yate & Chipping Sodbury	88	2.4
Thornbury	19	2
Rural Area	14	0
Sevenside	635	0

Safeguarded Land (Ha) lost to non-employment uses.

Source: SGC ELAS monitoring.

40 Access to employment and need to commute

Whilst our authority benefits from a strong economy and investment generally, there is an inequality of job opportunities across South Gloucestershire. The ratio of local jobs to resident workers (which is a measure of the relationship between where people live and work) varies widely. These patterns are dynamically changing due to new working practices and this will likely continue due to the impact of Covid-19, including greater levels of working from home.

46

However, some areas have long-standing issues with uneven numbers of people to local jobs. For example there are almost half as many 'jobs' in the East Fringe than the number of resident workers (ratio of 0.4), whilst in the North Fringe there are almost twice as many 'jobs' as the number of resident workers (ratio of 1.8).

The lack of access to job opportunities in some areas, and strong concentration of jobs in other parts of the authority and in central Bristol can contribute to patterns of commuting across the area. This contributes to significant congestion, adding to the issues highlighted above around climate change and air pollution, and also the perpetuation of inequalities in our region and our own area.

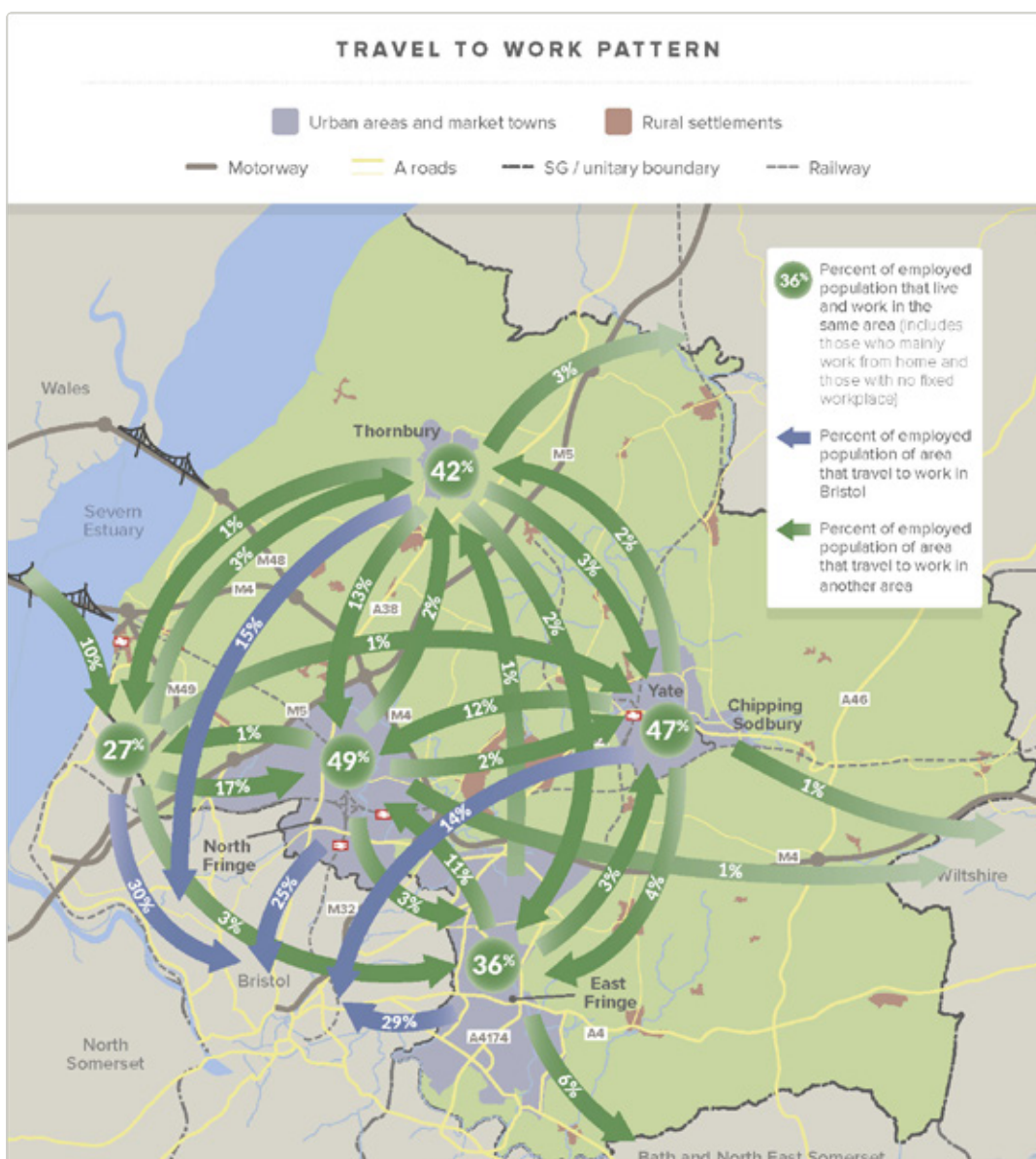
Policy Area	Resident workers within area	'Jobs' within area	Ratio Jobs per worker
East Fringe	53,800	24,000	0.4
North Fringe	32,600	57,700	1.8
Rural Area	24,900	15,600	0.6
Sevenside	1,900	2,400	1.2
Thornbury	5,900	5,900	1.0
Yate & Chipping Sodbury	18,300	13,200	0.7
South Gloucestershire	137,400	118,800	0.9

Ratio of jobs per worker 2011 Census (Table WF01BEW).



Travel and transport

South Gloucestershire's location next to a major city, its significant employment opportunities and position on the strategic road and rail network has historically encouraged high levels of investment and growth in housing and employment. This has led to high rates of traffic growth, increasing congestion, air pollution, unsustainable commuting patterns and longer journey times. A high quality of digital connectivity and broadband access can assist in reducing people's need to travel. However, there is a need to increase people's ability to walk and cycle to access key services and facilities, including community centres, some types of shopping, health, education, and certain types of employment. The key issues for the new Local Plan in relation to accessibility and transport are:



Travel to work patterns in South Gloucestershire.

41 Decarbonising transport

Transportation in South Gloucestershire is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. To sustainably connect people and places the plan will need to consider where new development of different scales should be placed and how to plan transport infrastructure and investment. Both need to prioritise people's ability to walk, cycle and utilise effective public transport to access key services and facilities²¹ and connect with the natural environment, rather than rely on private car journeys. There will also be a need to consider how to decarbonise public transport and private journeys when travel is necessary and increase digital connectivity.

Information collected in the Data and Access Profiles shows that the ability of individual communities to sustainably connect to existing key services and facilities (including whether broadband access is available in rural communities), by walking and cycling and the availability of suitable public transport connections, varies significantly across urban and rural areas.

42 Walkable neighbourhoods – access to key services and facilities in our urban areas

Urban areas and communities within South Gloucestershire are generally in closer proximity to a wide range of key services and facilities to enable access by walking and cycling. There is also generally a greater frequency, number and range of public transport connections available for those living in urban areas. However, there are variations across urban areas, in both the key services and facilities which people can walk and cycle to, and the range of public transport connections available:

- urban communities in the North Fringe such as Filton, Stoke Gifford, Harry Stoke and those in Yate have the opportunity to walk, or cycle to train stations, offering local and national connections which other communities do not have
- Cribbs Causeway, Stoke Gifford and Harry Stoke, Patchway and Filton have access to the widest range of bus connections to other centres and employment areas
- Yate, Stoke Gifford and Harry Stoke and Patchway, closely followed by Kingswood and Filton have the greatest number and range of key services and facilities in close proximity to enable walking and cycling access
- compared to other urban areas Oldland Common, Mangotsfield and Cadbury Heath have fewer key services and facilities in close proximity which they can access by walking and cycling

43 Walkable neighbourhoods – access to key services and facilities in our rural areas

Generally rural locations are likely to have lower levels of key services and facilities in close proximity, which means fewer people can safely walk and cycle to them. They can have lower-quality digital connections, along with fewer and less frequent public transport connections. Based on the current distribution of key services, facilities and transport infrastructure there are, however, significant variations between communities within rural South Gloucestershire.

²¹ Please see adopted Policy PSP11, for a list of key services, facilities and public transport criteria relating to sustainable access.

Our rural area contains some villages and rural locations with key services and facilities in close proximity to enable walking and cycling. Some of these locations also have regular public transport connections to destinations with further key services and facilities.

- Settlements such as Chipping Sodbury, Coalpit Heath, Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne are on public transport corridors that connect Yate/Chipping Sodbury and the North/East Fringe of Bristol. Similarly, Alveston, Rudgeway and Almondsbury are on a public transport corridor between the North Fringe and Thornbury.
- Villages, settlements and land adjacent to the urban edge sometimes have walking, cycling and/or relatively quick and regular public transport access to key services and facilities in the urban area. Such locations include Almondsbury, Bitton, Hambrook, Pucklechurch and Shortwood.
- There are some rural places which currently have minimal levels or no key services and facilities which can be accessed by walking and cycling. Many of these places also have either no, or a very low level of access by public transport, including; Aust, Badminton, Doynton, Dyrham, Elberton, Hallen, Hill, Hinton, Latteridge, Littleton-upon- Severn, Rockhampton, Tormarton, Upton Cheyney and West Littleton. These communities can often also have poor quality digital connectivity and broadband options.

44 Transport infrastructure

In recent years, significant new transport infrastructure has been delivered, including the Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN), MetroBus, and the expansion of Smart Motorways on the M4, M5 and M49 junction and improvement to the strategic cycle network in our district. However, transport schemes take time to plan and deliver and need significant levels of funding, and this has resulted in problems securing the timely provision of public transport to support the growing population.

Land to facilitate transport infrastructure including rail, public transport, walking, cycling and highway capacity schemes will need to be safeguarded in the new Local Plan.

- The Joint Local Transport Plan includes strategic rail, public transport, walking, cycling and highway capacity schemes that will need to be incorporated our Local Plan.
- At future stages we will be able to say more about the transport schemes that will help to support sustainable growth.

Government began consultation in 2020 on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans by [2040 or earlier](#). As part of the declared climate emergency, there is a need to consider how people travel in the future when not walking, cycling or using public transport. It is highly likely there will be an increased requirement for infrastructure to run alternative fuel cars and vehicles, including electric vehicles. The new Local Plan may need to set policy to require provision of this infrastructure as part of new development.



Supporting infrastructure

The key issues for the Plan in relation to the provision of supporting infrastructure are:

45 Infrastructure and new development

The rapid rate of development in the North and East Fringes of Bristol, Yate and Thornbury has required a wide range of supporting infrastructure, including new schools, community centres, enhanced public transport such as MetroBus services, along with open space. It can be challenging to ensure the right supporting infrastructure is provided before or alongside new homes, because this requires up-front investment and the subsidy of services provided ahead of a commercially sustainable level of demand. This is a complex issue which involves numerous different partners, funding and delivery mechanisms and practical considerations. However, it is important for new and existing communities that as far as possible the services and facilities needed to support new development can be delivered at the right time and to be viable, with long term management and maintenance arrangements in place.

46 Broadband and digital connections

50

Covid-19 has led to a change in working practices, demonstrating the need for effective digital connections and the significant impact of increased home working and video conferencing. One positive impact of this has been a reduction in transport emissions as significantly fewer people commuted to work. There will be an increased requirement for high-quality, digital access, to support improved connections between people, communities and future businesses including the developing TEC ARC and the Bristol & Bath Science Park. This will help to modernise working practices, including increased home working, and improve equality of access to employment opportunities across all of our communities, both urban and rural.

A range of key services and facilities, including some retail, health and education facilities, have an increasingly online and digital presence to how they connect with people and communities. The new Local Plan will need to investigate how greater provision for effective digital connections can be planned for and provided as part of new development.

47 Drainage and sewerage infrastructure

In planning for new development, we will need to consider, in partnership with Wessex Water, its potential impact on existing and planned wastewater and sewerage infrastructure, ensuring developments meet the requirements of the Drainage and Waste Water Management Plans. Development will need to ensure adequate treatment of waste and surface water to avoid water-quality deterioration and, where necessary, contribute to new infrastructure. Surface water runoff should be managed in a sustainable manner following the drainage hierarchy to ensure surface water flood risk is not increased. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) should be used to manage surface water runoff and be designed so as to achieve the four pillars of SuDs design, ensuring benefits in terms of water quantity and quality, ecology and amenity.

Sewage and water infrastructure may also offer opportunities for generation of renewable energy.

48 School capacity and access

The ability to access primary and secondary schools is a key consideration when planning growth. A Local Plan can safeguard and allocate sites for facilities to grow and new ones to be established. However, access to and capacity at schools can be affected, both positively and negatively, by the choice of growth locations.

- The council has an obligation to provide free transport where no education facilities are within a safe and appropriate walking distance of homes. The location of new homes will have a direct impact on the need and type of transport to education facilities, which has implications for climate change, congestion, health and well-being and the longer term economic sustainability of the Council.
- Some schools, particularly smaller schools in rural areas, have issues with their long-term sustainability and quality of education due to surplus capacity caused by a lack of new students²².
- In some locations it may not be possible for an education facility to grow and expand, even if additional capacity is required.

49 Community centres and community infrastructure

Equal access for everyone to facilities and places that provide opportunities for social, recreational, physical, learning and cultural activities, community engagement and the development of social capital is key to planned sustainable growth. Such facilities include community centres, libraries and recreation facilities. These support health and well-being and help improve health equalities. They should be located where they can be accessed sustainably, ideally by walking and cycling, and are affordable and easy to use for all ages and abilities and have viable long-term management arrangements.

²² <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/Small-Rural-Schools-Strategy-Final-June-20.pdf>

50 Sport and recreation

Participation in sport and physical activity has many benefits for health and well-being. To support this South Gloucestershire Council has adopted a [strategy](#) for providing playing pitches and indoor and built sports facilities. This aims to enable and increase participation for all parts of our communities. In terms of sports pitches the strategy is to protect, enhance and provide sports pitches, to meet the needs of existing and new residents. For indoor built facilities, there are identified needs to invest in Yate and Kingswood leisure centres and provide more capacity throughout the urban areas where there is currently insufficient capacity for the growing population. Enhanced and new sports pitches and facilities may need to be investigated to support growth set out by the new Local Plan. Development will also need to contribute to the provision of pitches, indoor and built facilities.

51 Doctors surgeries and GPs

The council works with partners, to assess where existing and new health facilities might need to be provided or expanded, to meet changing local needs. However, whilst the new Local Plan can allocate land for expansion or provision of new health facilities, public sector bodies are not in direct control of where and when GP practices expand or open. Under the current system they operate similarly to private businesses.

52

52 Blue light services

Our fire, police, ambulance and other emergency services are planning for their future, while we consider how to plan for our area. These partner organisations will have requirements for buildings and facilities as they consider how to serve communities into the future. There may be opportunities for better use of land currently in use and owned by these partner organisations, particularly in urban areas. There may also be a need to provide land for new facilities. In preparing strategies for growth the new Local Plan will need to work with these organisations to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the future of these services.

53 Waste

Improvements in waste infrastructure are needed between now and 2027 to serve our growing communities and to improve the sustainability of waste management, taking opportunities to establish energy efficient and circular approaches to storage, disposal and use of waste. New and enhanced waste transfer stations and recycling centres are being provided in the North and East Fringes of the urban areas to meet these needs. Other facilities may need to be planned for as we consider greater levels of growth in our new Local Plan.

54 Minerals

The ability to use the valuable aggregate mineral resources that exists in our area in a sustainable way plays an important part in the economic, environmental and infrastructure goals for South Gloucestershire. The resources in our area are an important contributor to the sub region and nation's mineral requirements and prosperity. They provide the critical raw material for built development and other construction, manufacturing and infrastructure, through their use as concrete, mortar, finishes, roadstone, constructional fill and railway ballast.

Minerals are a diminishing, finite, and often constrained resource and can only be worked where they are found. It is therefore important that through the new Local Plan we plan to maintain a steady and adequate supply of minerals, but also ensure minerals are extracted in a sustainable way and restoration of former mineral extraction areas within South Gloucestershire is progressed over the coming years

55 Renewable Energy

Through its declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, the Council pledged to provide the leadership to enable the whole area of South Gloucestershire to become carbon neutral by 2030. As part of this, the Council recognised the need to significantly increase renewable energy generation and signed the UK100 Pledge to enable communities to achieve 100% clean energy across all sectors. To this end, the Council is seeking to support a complete shift towards a renewable and more decentralised system of electricity generation and therefore need to understand and consider the potential for power generation within South Gloucestershire, and how best to ensure this potential is realised.

With this in mind, the Council has commissioned a study to investigate the potential to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. The study will provide an evidence base to: underpin emerging strategic and local planning policies; help develop a positive strategy for renewable and low carbon energy in Local Plan; and inform the Council's decision-making in relation to making the best use of land.

Questions

We have set out 55 issues which our Local Plan will need to consider. Do you agree that these are the right issues for our plan to consider?

Would you like to comment on any of the issues or add new issues?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

54

Potential priorities

To address the issues set out in the previous section we have identified 9 potential priorities that we could use to shape the content and approaches in our new Local Plan. The priorities may address more than one issue, for example, enabling significantly more walking and cycling, and will help to address both climate change and health issues. They will guide the type and content of any new planning policies we might prepare. The priorities also inform the choices and options for making decisions on the location of new homes, jobs, facilities and services.

These priorities, and the approach, policies and strategy which flow from them, will need to be developed innovatively, and allow for flexibility as new information and issues arise on Covid-19, the declared Climate Emergency, issues facing our natural environment and the regeneration of our town centres, high streets and economy. The priorities therefore need to be bold, challenging and promote debate. The alternative is that we gradually ‘revert back’ to how things were and lose the opportunity presented, through preparing our new Local Plan to make lasting changes.

1

Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate



- Minimise the need to travel, and where travel is necessary, decarbonise it by prioritising walking, cycling and effective public transport.
- Require zero carbon, energy-efficient building design and construction and support retrofitting to decarbonise heating.
- Significantly increase renewable and low-carbon energy generation.
- Increase our resilience to climate change impacts and threats, including flood risk, poor air-quality, overheating and our natural environment.

55

2

Protect and enhance our environment



- Avoid directing growth to locations which would cause unacceptable harm to natural or historic assets of designated importance, or to areas of highest flood risk.
- Establish, maintain and enhance the function and connectivity of green infrastructure and Nature Recovery Networks.
- Apply the mitigation hierarchy and achieve biodiversity net gain in new developments.
- Increase tree cover by requiring tree-planting and require the replacement of valuable trees lost to development.
- Protect and enhance the character, distinctiveness, quality and intrinsic features of the local landscape.

3

Development that promotes health and well-being



- Enable more active lifestyles including play, walking, cycling and sport.
- Ensure new homes, workplaces and streets provide high quality residential amenity, private space and internal layouts.
- Refocus on the value of high-quality green infrastructure, nature rich habitat and open spaces for all our communities.
- Promote healthy lifestyle choices through development, such as avoiding takeaways near schools.
- Deliver local regeneration, employment and education opportunities which contribute to reducing health inequalities.

4

Creating exceptional places and spaces



- Respond to key natural, built, historic and landscape assets and local character to create high-quality developments, which add to, or create, a sense of place.
- Buildings and infrastructure should be designed and built to deal with and adapt to climate change.
- New communities should be designed to be walkable and cycleable neighbourhoods.
- New homes and infrastructure should be adaptable and accessible to cater for households whose needs may change over time, and for our ageing population.
- Promote opportunities and life chances for all.

5

Planning for urban and rural areas



- Optimise the quality, density and range of uses being developed in urban areas and on brownfield sites, but achieve a high quality of life in urban communities - an “Urban Lifestyles” approach.
- Identify urban locations that will need long-term regeneration to deliver positive development and change.
- Share the benefits of well-planned growth and prosperity across urban and appropriate rural communities.
- If the Bristol and Bath Green Belt is reviewed, and parts of it are required to meet growth needs, ensure its long-term purpose and function is maintained and its recreational value enhanced.

6

Provide the right type and number of new homes

- Allocate sites to deliver new homes to meet the need identified in the West of England Spatial Development Strategy.
- Provide homes that meet the needs of all our communities including Affordable Homes
- Provide a portfolio of sites, of different sizes, in a range of sustainable locations across South Gloucestershire.
- Provide resilience to our 5-Year supply of housing land.
- Explore new forms of landownership and delivery models, to deliver a range of housing types.
- Provide for self-build and custom housebuilding.
- Provide land and policies to facilitate the delivery of small sites.

7

Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy

- Ensure a “green” economic recovery from Covid-19 and growth of green technology and clean businesses and sectors.
- Rethink town centres and high streets, in terms of what they offer and how they operate.
- Build on and enhance digital connectivity across the area.
- Plan for the employment land and jobs required to meet the needs identified by the West of England Spatial Development Strategy.
- Ensure safeguarded employment sites are flexible and attractive to accommodate businesses of all sizes, including key local sectors in a rapidly changing economic and retail environment.
- Ensure a balanced range of safeguarded employment land across South Gloucestershire, so that all communities have access to job opportunities that are accessible by walking, cycling and effective public transport.
- Build on the potential for tourism and the visitor economy in our area.

8

Achieving sustainable travel and transport



- New growth should be in close proximity to existing or new key services and facilities, to create walkable and cycleable neighbourhoods.
- Effective public transport connections will be required where travel is needed.
- Facilitate walking, cycling and public transport by providing high-quality, safe connections and routes.
- Promote and bring about positive travel habits through travel planning.
- Infrastructure for alternative-fuel vehicles should be available in new developments.
- Safeguard land required for new transport schemes.

9

Ensuring the timely and efficient provision of infrastructure to support growing communities



- Direct development to those locations well-served or capable of being well served by infrastructure including utilities, key services and facilities and public transport in a cost effective and efficient manner.
- New development through its location, design and contribution should support the long-term success and sustainability of schools, community infrastructure and open spaces.
- Explore a range of landownership and delivery models, so as to maximise and deliver infrastructure earlier, and ensure its long-term maintenance and management.
- Ensure the alignment of the delivery of all development including new homes, employment and significant projects, with the provision of all necessary infrastructure.

Questions

Do you agree with the potential priorities?

Do you have any comments on the potential priorities?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

5 Strategy – Where will new development go?

A key theme of this consultation is how we begin to look at the opportunities and challenges of providing a significant number of new homes, jobs and new infrastructure in South Gloucestershire.

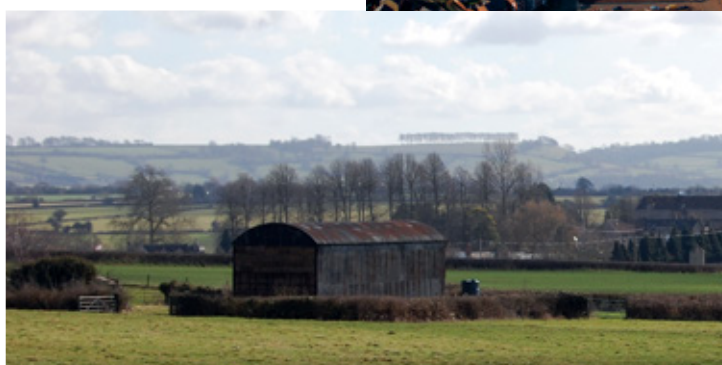
The choices we make about where we put new development and where we protect will form the basis of a new growth strategy for the Local Plan 2020. This strategy eventually needs to set out where in South Gloucestershire we locate a large number of new homes, space for jobs, supporting services, facilities and infrastructure.

The current strategy for growth of new homes and jobs is set out in the Core Strategy, Policy CS5 (Location of Development). You can read more about the current strategy approach in the context section of this document. To respond effectively to changes in local circumstances and the issues facing South Gloucestershire we need to develop a new strategy.

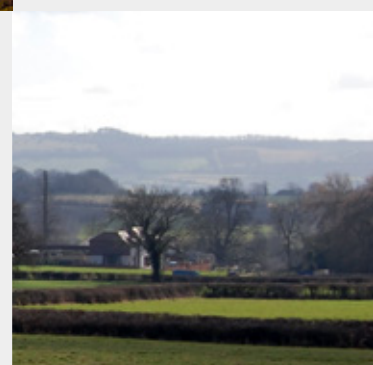
This strategy will need to be in conformity with the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) currently being prepared by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). The Issues and Priorities section, issue 27 and 36, explains more about this, and how the SDS will establish the overall amount of housing and jobs required in the West of England.



North Yate
Core Strategy
Growth.



Siston
Landscape.



Winterbourne
Medieval Barn.



Key building blocks and principles: informing future options and choices

To help support the work of the SDS, we think our plan-making should begin with investigating initial 'building blocks' and potential 'guiding principles' that could shape our new growth strategy. These building blocks and principles can then assist us to make choices.

As our new Local Plan progresses, the building blocks and guiding principles will help to guide and inform which locations have the potential to be considered as realistic options for the sustainable development of new homes, jobs, key services, facilities and infrastructure in South Gloucestershire.

The next section is split into 2 parts:

1. identifying the potential building blocks
2. potential guiding principles for growth

In developing our growth strategy, we will aim to:

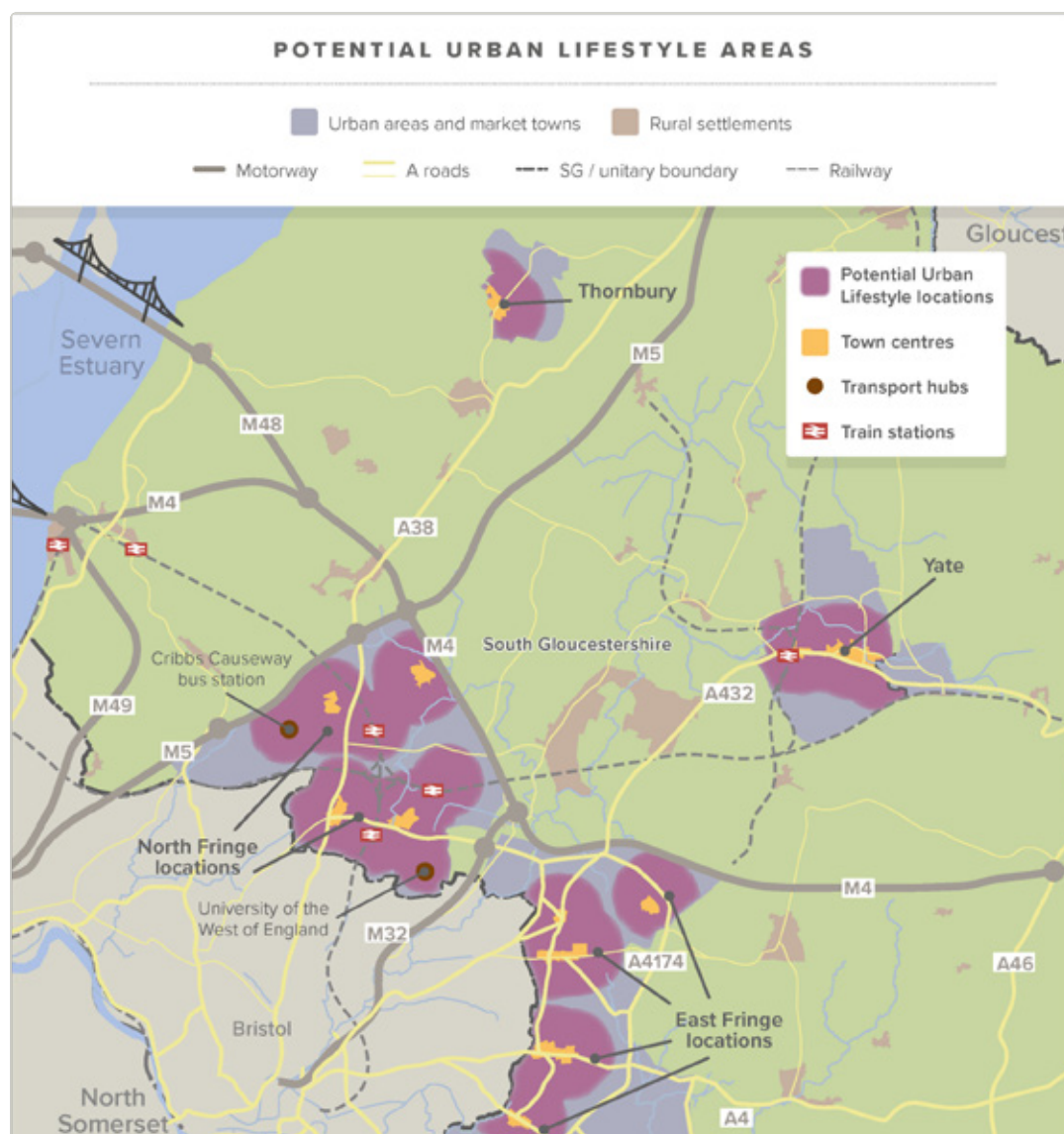
- meet the agreed requirements for new homes and jobs that will be set out in the SDS, by putting our commitment to a green economic recovery post Covid-19 and to restore and enhance the natural environment at the heart of our approach to identifying sites and areas of growth for new homes and jobs within South Gloucestershire.
- provide new homes and jobs that offer affordability and choice across a wide range of locations and site sizes, throughout the district, and ensure the timely provision of those homes and jobs with essential infrastructure.
- improve the longer-term health, well-being and sustainability of our communities by ensuring that new and existing places offer a balance of new homes and jobs, built around a high quality, natural and built environment and the opportunities this provides for physical activity, including children's play, walking and cycling, access to formal and informal community meeting spaces and green spaces.

Identifying potential building blocks

BUILDING BLOCK ① existing urban areas

The first building block we need to fully explore is further development of land in our existing urban areas.

National Planning Policy requires our new growth strategy to include a focus on our urban areas, including brownfield sites and optimising the level of new homes, jobs and services that come forward on urban sites. However, increasing the amount of future growth in our urban areas will also need to positively address inequalities, the quality of built and natural environments, and regenerate our town centres, high streets and urban areas. To achieve growth in our urban communities, and have positive outcomes will require new approaches to development.



We will therefore be looking to:

- optimise the density, efficient use of land and mix of uses within existing settlement boundaries, where consistent with our ambition of creating great places to live and work. It is suggested this is done in the urban areas of the Bristol North and East Fringe, Yate and Thornbury.
- promote and direct opportunities to co-ordinate renewal, investment, new uses and development in and around our urban town centres and high streets, to ensure that they remain vibrant, viable and serve local community's needs, now and into the future.
- support the ambitions of a 'green economic recovery' to improve and benefit the local and regional economy.

Our emerging approach to planning for further growth in our urban areas is explored further in the Urban Lifestyles, in section 6 of this document - 'Urban Lifestyles'.

Building blocks beyond our urban areas

We must emphasise that at this point no decisions have been made. However, the likelihood of meeting all of our needs for new homes and jobs in the urban areas, with Building block 1, is low. There will only be so much development that renewal, regeneration and re-use of urban and brownfield land can provide. There will also be a need to ensure development in urban areas does not lead to negative impacts on the quality of life, economy and sustainability of our existing urban communities. Other areas of South Gloucestershire may also benefit from growth to improve or maintain their longer-term sustainability as mixed and balanced communities and provide a choice of new homes, including affordable ones.

To ensure that we maintain a good quality of life for those who live, work and visit urban South Gloucestershire, we need to consider where else in our area should be investigated for planned growth. At this stage, we want to begin discussing and investigating the basic choices available to us.

National policy suggests that where large numbers of homes and jobs are required, and the level of growth can't be accommodated from the re-use of brownfield land, greenfield extensions to urban areas, towns and villages may offer the next best opportunity in meeting need.

As we begin considering how to prepare a strategy for growth of homes, jobs, facilities and services in South Gloucestershire, it is likely that focused development in greenfield and rural areas of the district, including around our market towns, rural villages and settlements, will need to be investigated.

With the Plan at such an early stage, it is not appropriate to identify individual locations, or specify how much growth should be apportioned to certain places. Until such time as the overall growth target for new homes and jobs is known, and the call for sites and other evidence work has been concluded, we currently have an incomplete understanding of where potential options for new development might be.

However, what we do know is we have basic building blocks that are available to us to start considering and investigating growth which our new Local Plan will need to accommodate.

In considering our building blocks, we do have choices, and we will need to investigate if all, or just some, are appropriate and needed. Our future growth strategy could combine places within each building block, where they support our Plan priorities for climate change, our environment, the creation of exceptional places and the improvement of health and well-being. The choice of building blocks, would be in addition to further development in our urban area (Building block 1) and as a starting point might include:

BUILDING BLOCK 2

expanding our main urban areas through small or large urban extensions

This building block would see expansion into locations beyond the communities of the North and East Fringe, to meet the needs for new homes and jobs. In most cases, it would require development of land currently in the Green Belt.

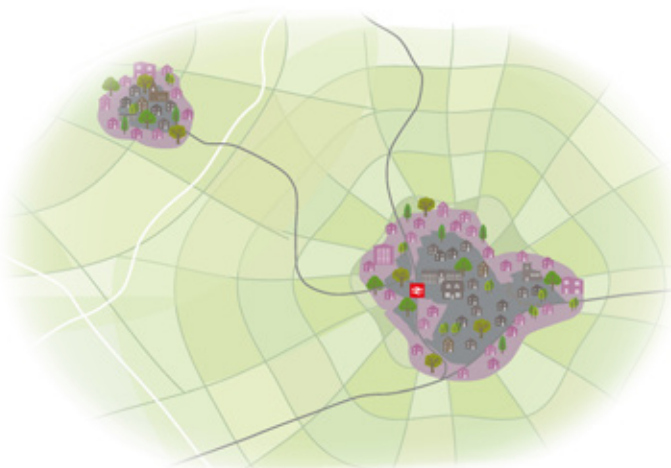


BUILDING BLOCK 3

growth around our market towns

Under this building block, the potential for sustainable growth would be investigated around the edges of our three market towns. This would investigate development beyond the existing settlement boundaries at Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury.

These locations include land currently designated as Green Belt and land outside of the Green Belt.



BUILDING BLOCK 4 rural villages and settlements

This building block would investigate the potential for an appropriate level of sustainable growth (large scale or small and medium scale) in and around the wide range of rural villages and settlements in the district.

Some of these villages and settlements are in the Green Belt, some are outside of the Green Belt and a number of our villages and settlements are 'washed over' by the Green Belt. Some of our villages in the east of the district, also lie within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

How we might approach and investigate the appropriate level of small and medium scale growth in our rural villages and settlements is discussed in section 7 of this document.

There may also be potential to deliver larger-scale growth in some of our rural villages and settlements instead of, or in addition to, any proposals for small and medium-scale growth.



BUILDING BLOCK 5 large scale free standing new settlements

The opportunity to consider new settlements is another building block, and could cover any large greenfield area in the district. Locations may be within or outside of the Green Belt.

Large sites like this will require careful investigation to support the delivery of sustainable new communities, like the necessary provision of key infrastructure, services and facilities. The relationship of any new proposed settlement to existing settlements will also need to be considered.

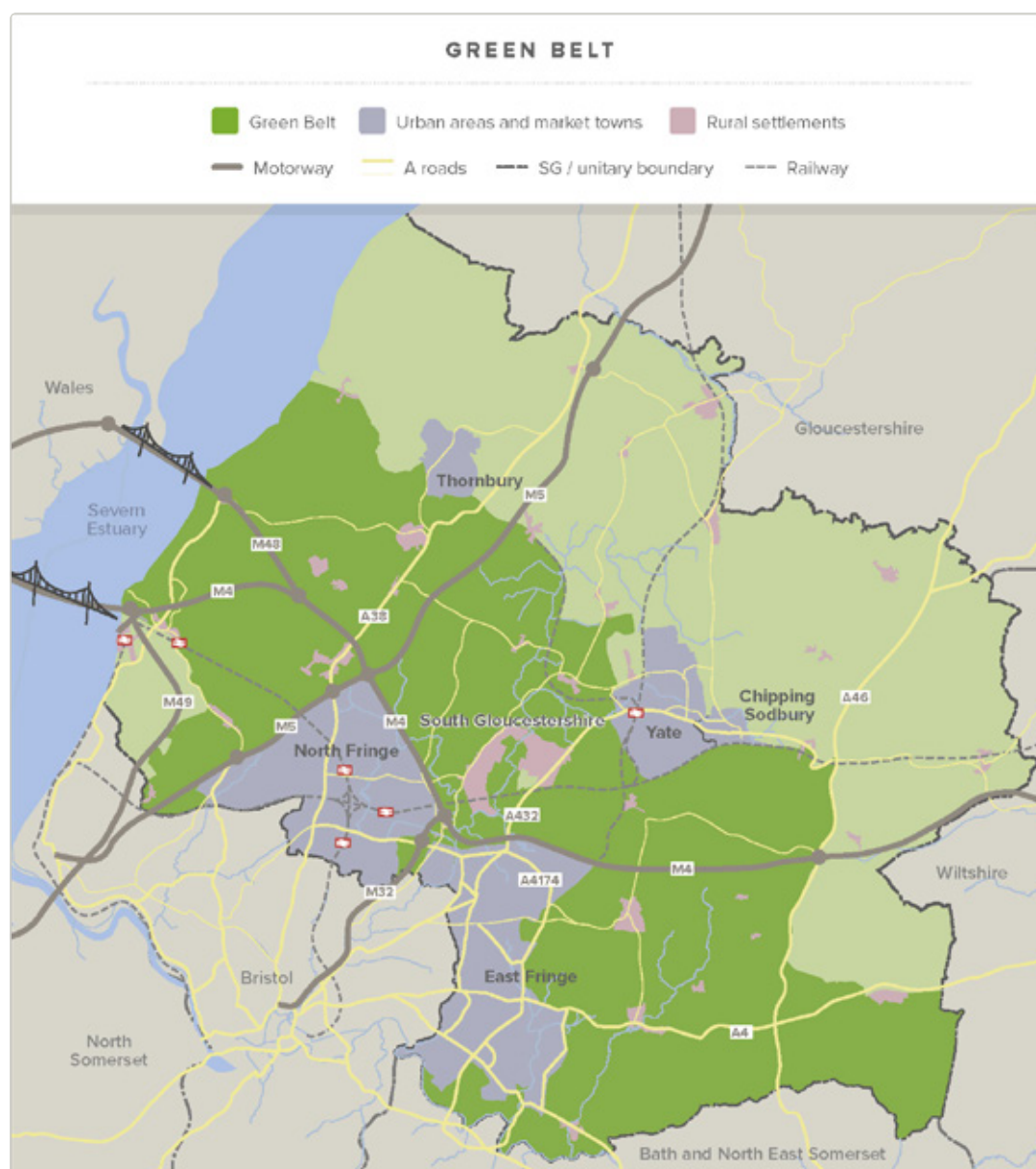


Investigating the Green Belt?

Many of our rural communities, or land in rural areas, including our market towns are located close to the urban edge of Bristol where new proposals could be supported by high levels of walking, cycling and effective public transport to key services and facilities.

However, much of this land is currently designated as Green Belt.

Balancing the need for new homes, jobs, services and facilities with the need for sustainable development particularly becoming carbon neutral in line with the climate emergency, may require areas of Green Belt to be investigated.



All of our Building Blocks, with the exception of further urban development might include investigation of Green Belt locations. Building block 2, urban extensions would require use of Green Belt land. Maximising opportunities to provide land for renewable energy generation, green infrastructure and Nature Recovery Networks also needs to be recognised and supported where possible within Green Belt areas.

However, in line with national guidance, consideration should only be given to building on Green Belt land after brownfield, urban and non-Green Belt options, including any potential capacity within our neighbouring authorities, have first been investigated.

Developing a growth strategy: potential guiding principles

To inform the development of a new growth strategy, when we begin investigation of our initial building blocks and the individual locations within them, we could look to apply six, potential, guiding principles. These principles will help us assess the suitability of the different locations to accommodate new growth, while helping to meet the ‘Potential Priorities’ discussed in Section 4 of this document.

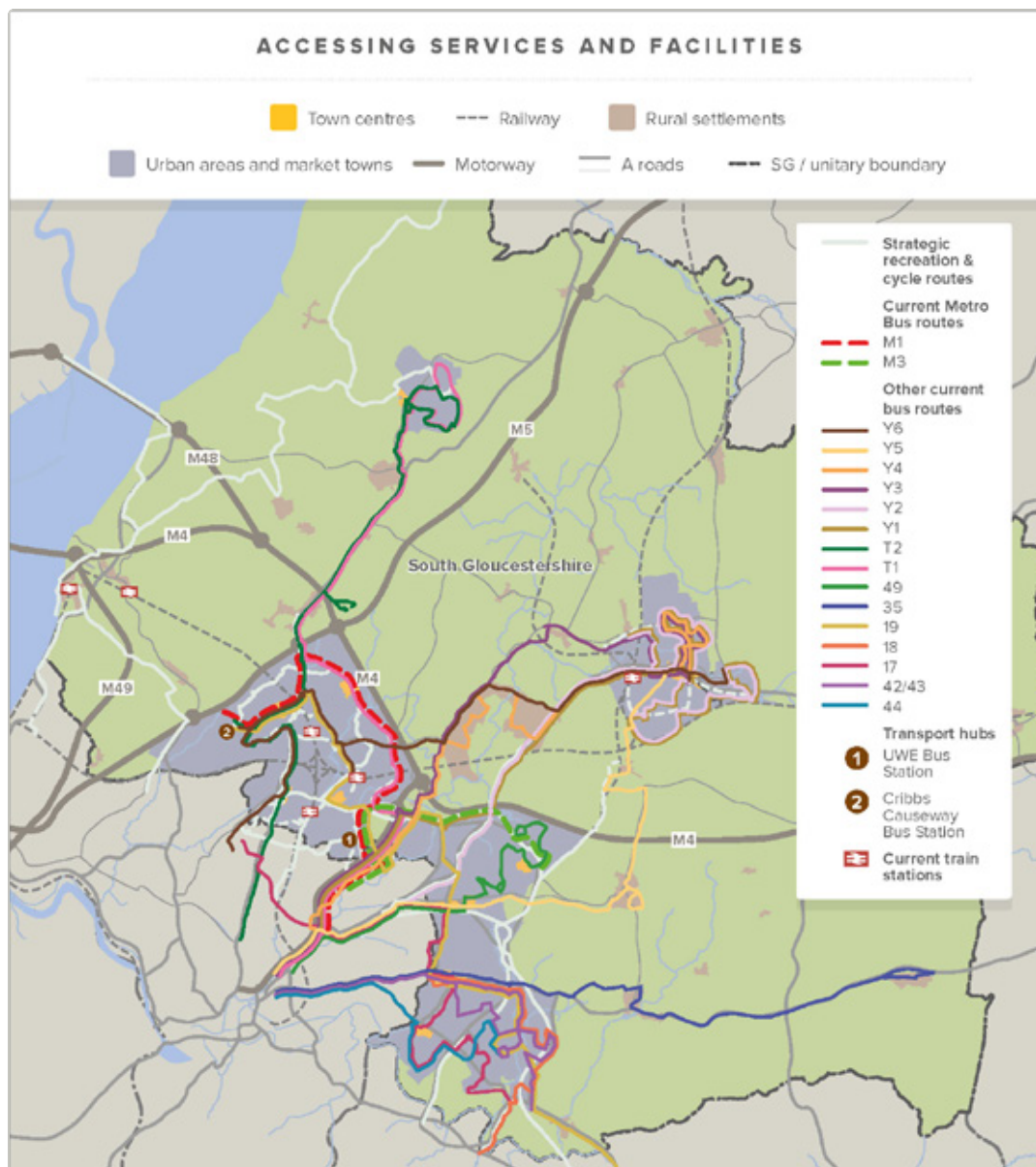
These are initial ideas, which we want to discuss and share with you. The guiding principles we apply will need to be consistent with those set out in the sub-regional SDS, which is currently under development.

-
- ① **Locate new homes, jobs or settlements in places where key services and facilities are easily accessed by walking and cycling or effective public transport, or alternatively in locations where key services and facilities are capable of being provided as part of the new development**
-

This will consider proximity of potential locations to key services and facilities, train stations (existing and planned), key public transport corridors, the strategic cycle network and key walking routes. It is possible that new services, facilities and transport infrastructure may come forward during the Plan period. These could provide new and improved opportunities for some communities to access a greater variety of key facilities and services.

As part of this principle, the larger the scale of growth proposed, the more local services and facilities, including opportunities for local employment would be expected to be provided. These should be accessible by walking and cycling.

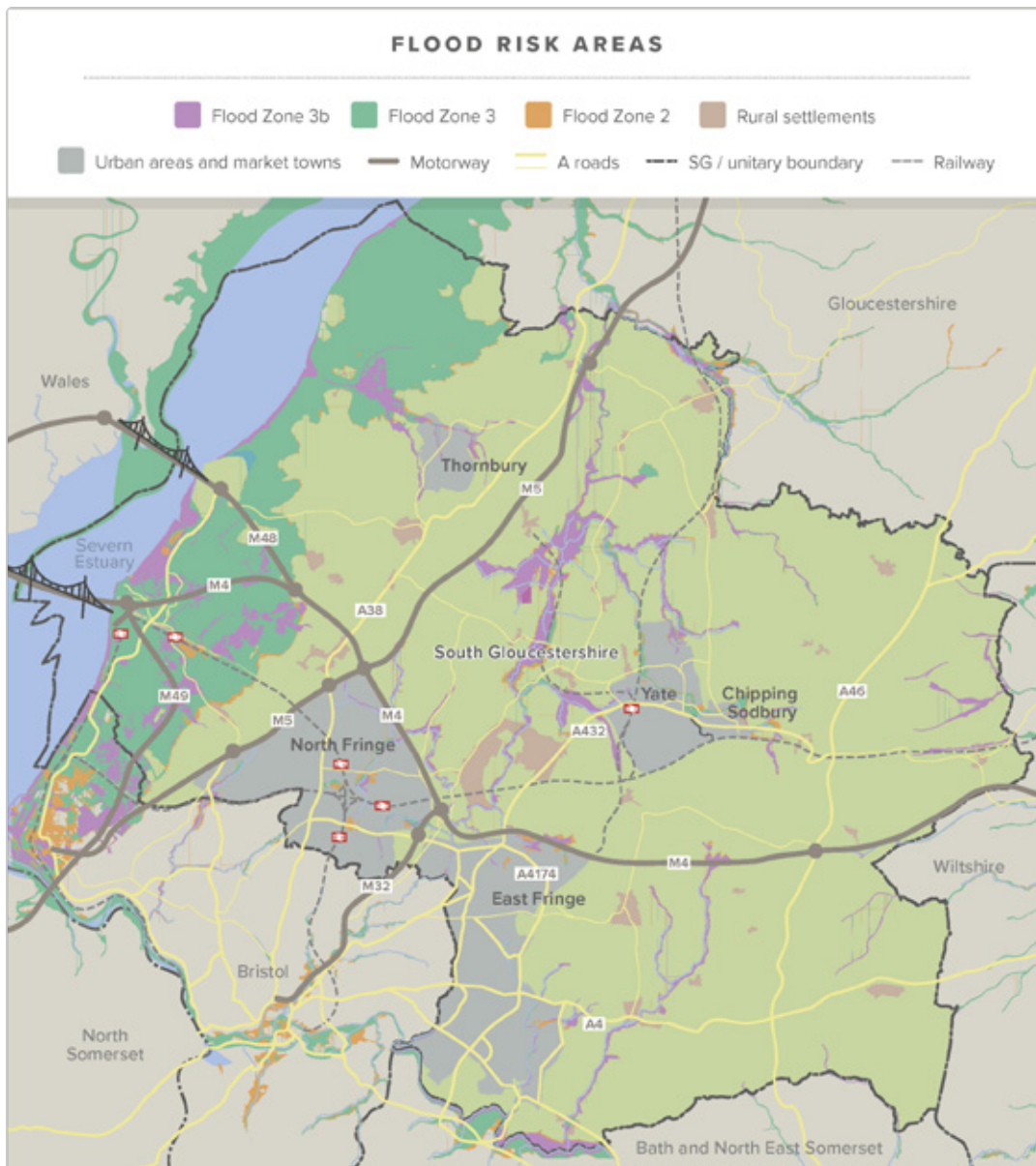
By locating the growth of new homes and jobs in locations that avoid creating a reliance on private car journeys, and instead, promote walking, cycling and effective public transport use, suggested Plan priorities can be assisted relating to *“pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate”, “achieving sustainable travel”, promoting health and well-being”, and “ensuring the timely and efficient provision of infrastructure to support growing communities”*



② Sequential approach to building on areas at a high risk of flooding

A large area of the district falls within Flood Zone 3 (highest risk) and Flood Zone 2.²³ The high risk zones are mostly in the area next to the Severn Estuary. Climate change is likely to have an impact on flood risk, in particular, by increasing the extent of an area at highest risk, as well as the frequency of potential flood events. One of the Plan’s priorities is to *“pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate”* and we need to plan accordingly to deal with this.

²³ 22% of land within the district falls within Flood Zone 3 (highest risk) as well as 29% in Flood Zone 2. Key areas at risk include land along the Severn Estuary, the Avonmouth & Severnside Enterprise Area, the villages of Severn Beach and Pilning and a number of smaller settlements.



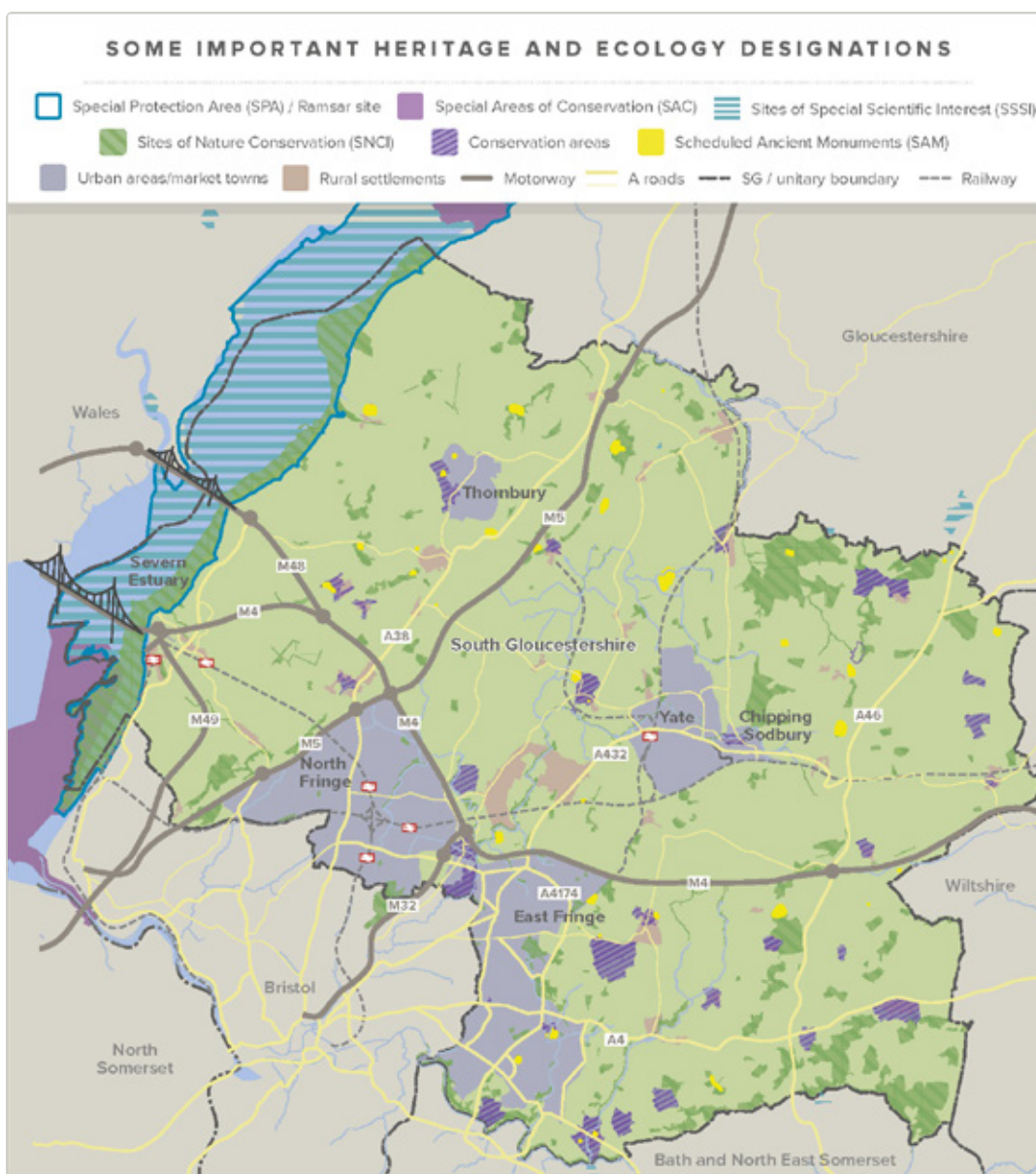
National policy requires our investigation of growth to undertake a sequential approach. This means investigating growth in areas of the highest flood risk, if no locations in the area of lowest flood risk (Flood Zone 1) are available to meet our growth needs. National Planning Policy²⁴ is clear that 'sensitive development' which, includes the provision of new housing, should be directed away from areas at high risk of flooding, now and in the future.

However, there are also a number of rural communities that lie within the areas of highest flood risk and opportunities to attract investment, growth and regenerate is impacted by flood risk. It is important that we understand the needs and aspirations of these communities, and work with our partners to understand if and how local needs can be met. This will allow communities in the highest areas of flood risk to investigate and understand what their long-term needs might be and ensure that they remain safe and sustainable over the Plan period.

24 National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 157

3 Protect and enhance ecological, landscape and heritage designations and their settings.

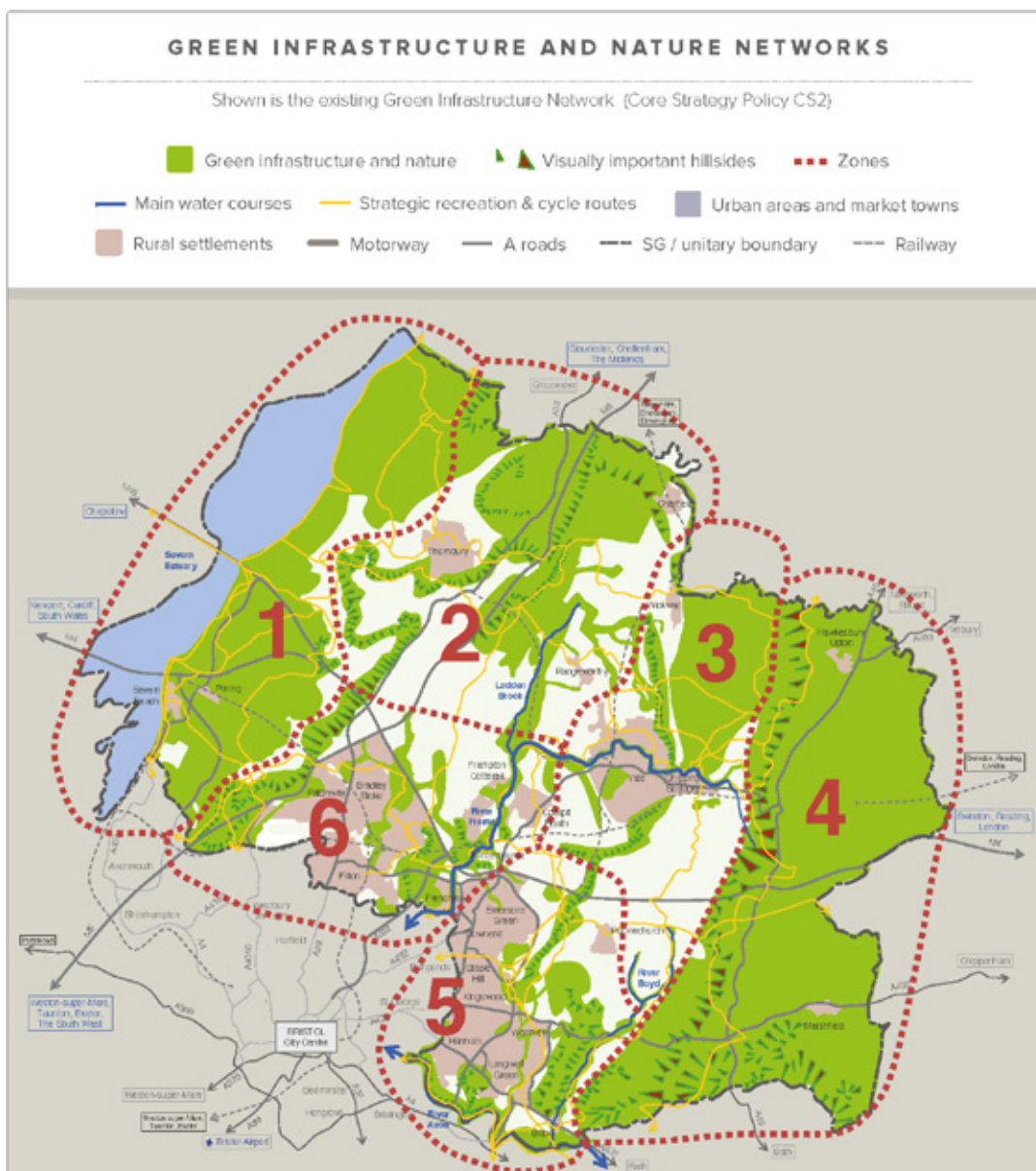
The natural and historic environment is recognised as an essential tool in helping to deliver the social, economic and environmental benefits that attract people to live and work in the district. The protection and enhancement of our natural and historic environment is at the heart of national policy for achieving sustainable development.



The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to nature for our health and well-being. In championing our green economic recovery, it is crucial we put the natural environment and a plethora of services – clean air, water, food, biodiversity, shade, recreation and recycling at the heart of all we do. Ensuring that this guiding principle is followed as we build our growth strategy for new homes and jobs will ensure that Plan priorities relating to “*Protect and enhance our environment*”, “*Creating exceptional places and spaces*” and “*Development that promotes health and well-being*” are realised.

4 Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of our Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery Networks.

Green Infrastructure (GI), which includes Blue Infrastructure (GI/BI), when planned effectively can create a strategic network of natural and semi natural features, green spaces and rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect villages, towns and cities. Individually, these elements are GI assets, and the roles that these assets play are GI functions.



A South Gloucestershire network of GI, including a Nature Recovery Network is currently being developed, and will be informed by the recently published ‘West of England Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy’ (JGIS). When considering the building blocks and places to investigate for the growth of homes and jobs, it is important that we look to protect and enhance key Green Infrastructure elements and assets, whilst also improving connectivity of the emerging GI and nature recovery networks.

This will deliver a wide range of benefits, including:

- **adaption to climate change;** green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management
- **biodiversity/Environmental protection;** high-quality networks of multifunctional Green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work
- **access, recreation, play, movement and leisure;** green infrastructure can improve the well-being of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits
- **promoting economic growth, employment and skills improvement;** green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, helping to create high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors
- **landscape setting and context;** green infrastructure can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty
- **Energy production and conservation**
- **Increasing the sustainability of food production, soil health and productive landscapes**
- **Flood attenuation (SuDS) and protection**
- **Cultural heritage**

Supplementing our previous principles focused on designated environmental sites, building our growth strategy to protect and enhance networks of Green Infrastructure will have positive effects on many aspects of our priorities relating to *“Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate”, “Protect and enhance our environment”, “Creating exceptional places and spaces” and “Development that promotes health and well-being”*.

5 Plan for a better balance between local jobs and resident workers in our communities

It is important that our new Local Plan facilitates a prosperous economy in South Gloucestershire and does so in a way that brings about a ‘clean’ economic recovery from Covid-19 and encourages economic growth that invests in renewable energy, and addresses inequalities in our communities. While our building blocks and growth strategy will seek to provide land for employment growth, our strategy for the growth of homes and jobs will also need to reduce the need to travel for job opportunities and provide new opportunities in communities that have existing inequalities issues, and a lack of access to employment.



Bristol and Bath Science Park.



■ Aztec West.

Providing opportunities for employment, particularly in those areas of the authority that may have existing inequalities, or where the balance of people to jobs makes finding employment more challenging, will guide decisions of where our strategy focuses large amounts of new homes and jobs.

In addition to meeting our Plan priority that relates to *“enabling a productive, clean and inclusive economy”*, applying this principle will make sure that our growth strategy contributes to the Plan priorities that relate to, *“pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate”*, *“achieving sustainable travel”*, *“planning for urban and rural areas”*, *“provide the right type and number of new homes”* and *“development that promotes health and well-being”*.



■ Airbus at Filton.

6 Ensuring that we protect a ‘sense of place and character’ when we plan for new development

In planning a new strategy for growth, it’s essential to recognise the different characteristics and identities of the urban areas, market towns and rural villages in South Gloucestershire.

New development must be designed so that it is a positive addition to existing communities, in a way that promotes a sense of place, strengthens community identity and reflects local character and key features. This can be guided by planning policies, but our strategy for growth will need to have a positive impact on character and identity.

Well planned growth, should create exceptional places and must respond to the existing natural, built, historic and landscape assets, while enhancing the future character and distinctiveness of each unique area.

Previous levels of growth experienced by a particular area may also be a relevant factor when considering proposals for new development. Consideration will be given to the context of the existing community and the proposed development, as well as the area’s ability to accommodate further growth.

This principle will ensure our growth strategy contributes to the Plan priorities that relate to, *“planning for urban and rural areas”*, *“protect and enhance our environment”* and *“creating exceptional places and spaces”*.

What happens next?

A Call for Sites exercise ran until the end of October 2020. This provided an opportunity for landowners and developers to submit sites to the Council for consideration for housing or economic uses, and developed as part of our new Local Plan. Sites submitted through this process, along with other potential sites identified by the Council or through the SDS consultation, will create an understanding of where growth is being suggested, and subsequently where it could be located.

Once the details of the sub regional SDS are known, we will have a better understanding of the overall number of new homes and jobs that need to be planned for. We can then begin Phase 2 of the Local Plan 2020 consultation and preparation.

Phase 2 of the consultation will consider our overall growth requirements and, using the building blocks and guiding principles, identify where new homes and jobs might be located and where they might need to be protected. It will present potential options and locational choices for consultation.

In August 2020, the government published for consultation a “[Planning White Paper](#)”, that proposed significant changes to the planning system and national planning policy. This includes changes to the way Local Plans are produced and what they should include. This will impact on how we progress our new Local Plan, and what we consult you on in future years.

At the moment, we cannot be sure what, the exact changes to the planning system and, the new requirements for Local Plans will be.

It is likely to affect the way we present and discuss future options and choices. What is certain however, is that we will be required to plan for new homes and jobs in our area, and through our new Local Plan, we will need to make choices about growth, change and protection in the urban and rural communities of South Gloucestershire. We will also need to set out a new strategy for growth, protection, change and renewal, in South Gloucestershire.

This section begins by raising awareness of what we need to do, and is the starting point in considering how we can begin to think about the choices we might have.

Questions

Do you agree with the five building blocks (Urban Areas, Urban Extensions, Market Towns, Rural Villages, New Settlements)?

Do you have any comments on the five building blocks (Urban Areas, Urban Extensions, Market Towns, Rural Villages, New Settlements)?

Do you agree with the initial guiding principles?

Do you think we have missed any key, initial guiding principles?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.



Urban Lifestyles

The aim of this section is to describe how we may approach the provision of increased levels of growth and development while creating a high quality of life in our urban areas.

This proposed new approach to development in some of our urban areas is called Urban Lifestyles. The Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on our lives has shown how important it is that our main urban areas and town centres are vibrant, healthy and safe places that provide good access to open spaces, public and private gardens and clean air. The Covid-19 pandemic has also shown us that the type and size of our homes has a major impact on our wellbeing too. Seeing how our communities have been impacted by Covid-19 has given us a renewed commitment to develop a new, better, local, place-based, approach, built around our local communities.

Part ① presents information on the background to the Urban Lifestyles approach, why it is needed, what it means, what it may look like and where it may be appropriate.

It is presented in six parts and covers the following discussion topics:

1. Introduction
2. Why is South Gloucestershire Council developing an Urban Lifestyles approach?
3. How is Urban Lifestyles different to the existing approach?
4. What would an Urban Lifestyles development look like?
5. Urban Lifestyles – which Locations?
6. Areas of focus, sites and change

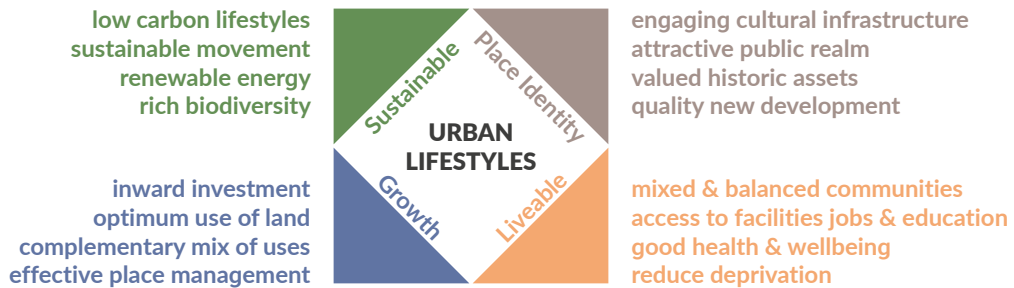
Part ② presents information on the key places where we think this can be most effective at supporting further development that promotes our commitment to sustainable Urban Lifestyles. We identify 14 places where we think an Urban Lifestyles policy approach could be appropriate.

This is focused on the most accessible locations in and around our designated town centres, rail stations and transport hubs:

7. Communities of the Bristol North Fringe
 - Cribbs / Mall, former Filton Airfield, Patchway Town Centre, Bradley Stoke Town Centre, Filton Town Centre, Parkway Rail Station to UWE
8. Communities of the Bristol East Fringe
 - Kingswood, Staple Hill, Downend, Emersons Green, Hanham, Longwell Green
9. Yate
10. Thornbury

Part ① Background: why, what, where and future work

Our new Local Plan must demonstrate that we are making the most effective use of land – particularly on brownfield sites to support the new homes, jobs and infrastructure that we will need.



This means we must investigate new approaches to how we live, and how urban areas are developed. We must be able to achieve growth and change that is sustainable and of a high quality. We should also avoid significant impacts on the environment and quality of life for people living in, working in, and visiting urban areas.

'Urban Lifestyles' is the term we've given to how new approaches to change and growth in our urban areas is investigated and delivered. Urban Lifestyles aims to make the best use of sites that are made available for development or repurposing and promote better use of land in the most appropriate and sustainable urban locations. This development must be well-designed and built to a high standard.

Urban Lifestyles also allows us to consider how we might provide a range of different uses for available sites and land. This range of uses should not just include places for people to live, but should also include employment opportunities, leisure activities, cultural facilities and shops. By applying a range of mixed uses, we can create vibrant destinations and offer an enhanced experience for residents and visitors, and increase the amount of people who live in, work in, and visit our urban areas. Particularly, our high streets, town centres and major urban centres, which we can help to make more sustainable, and make sure that they thrive in the future.

The character and context of our existing urban areas should inform the level of development appropriate for individual areas and sites, and avoid negative impacts on people, character and assets in urban South Gloucestershire. Levels of walking, cycling and public transport access to key services and facilities will also inform where, and to what extent, greater levels of development can take place. Promoting and supporting these forms of sustainable travel is a key component of the Urban Lifestyles approach. To ensure high-quality and positive change in our urban communities throughout our new Local Plans period and into the future, new forms of planning policies are needed, and in some places, we will also need detailed master plans. The Urban Lifestyles approach will inform these changes.

Why is South Gloucestershire Council developing an Urban Lifestyles approach?

Our urban areas have a range of existing issues and new challenges, and opportunities will be created by the need for greater levels of development and change in our urban areas. This has been clearly demonstrated to us by the Covid-19 situation, and our response needs to be clear, ambitious and capable of introducing lasting transformation.

National Planning Policy Framework (in particular, paragraphs 122 and 123) requires that our new Local Plan, and future development of urban areas, must increase the density of development, by making efficient use of land in sustainable urban locations. This approach can also help to reduce the pressure to build on greenfield land and presents an opportunity to reinvigorate urban areas.

[The National Design Guide](#), a government document setting out how we should plan areas, supports well-designed, new development that makes efficient use of land, with an amount and mixture of development and open space, that optimises density:

- in this document we use the phrase ‘optimising’, when we refer to increasing the level of development and density on appropriate sites
- optimising development, means making efficient use of land through balancing a higher density of development with quality of life and environmental factors, to create well-designed living environments that are appropriate and suitable for the location

There are poorly designed developments and spaces in South Gloucestershire that fail to make the most effective use of urban and brownfield land:

- these includes low-density housing estates and campus-style business parks, underused areas, vacant sites, back-land parking and garaging sites, and leftover spaces
- while these are a product of their time, they do not optimise land and could provide opportunities as they become available for development



Rubbish dumped in poorly maintained rear parking court.



Insecure and unsafe access to housing area.

Issues and Opportunities

While we need to optimise density and make sure future plans and developments make more efficient use of land, we need this to be focused in the right urban areas. We also need to make sure that we have new planning criteria to avoid overdevelopment and negative impacts on people and the built and natural environment.

The following issues and opportunities are important to consider:

Issue 1: limited access, amenity and overspill impacts

- greater levels of development in urban locations that lack walking, cycling and public transport access to key services and facilities, which can lead to an increase in car travel
- optimising density, and greater levels of development, can potentially increase issues of overlooking, or the failure to provide high-quality private and public realm spaces, or access to open space, as well as the potential for greater disturbance from noise and air pollution
- poorly planned development can lead to an increase in ‘overspill’ problems, like poorly controlled on and off-street car parking, inadequate bin storage and can also contribute to a poor living environment, including antisocial behaviour

Opportunity:

Optimising the density of developments must maintain an area’s prevailing character and setting, and provide well-designed, attractive and healthy places:

- higher densities in the right locations can make public transport systems more viable, because more people, who may want to use the services, can be served by these transport systems and services
- sustainable travel options, like walking and cycling, are a critical part of the Urban Lifestyles’ approach and, become far more appealing when people live closer to shops and services, like near high streets and town centres
- on housing sites where density is optimised, the provision of good, readily accessible amenity spaces like balconies, public areas and open spaces should be included
- good-sized and comfortable apartments and houses, with low running costs and low-carbon energy consumption, are a key focus – while appreciating and respecting local built character and heritage assets

Issue 2: connecting open spaces and landscapes

There are some poorly connected or maintained open spaces, which can lead to them being underused. There are also ongoing issues to protect or improve the network of street trees and canopy cover. This affects enjoyment and wellbeing in the public realm, high streets and town centres, as well as people’s ability to access high-quality open spaces.

Opportunity:

- providing access, views and integration of open space, green assets, and connections to the surrounding countryside from the urban area, will become increasingly important with more people and development requiring strong networks of green infrastructure for people and wildlife

Issue 3: traditional, existing housing stock

The existing urban areas of South Gloucestershire are made up of largely traditional housing, with a mixture of Victorian, 1930s and 1940s suburban housing, and more recently, housing estates in Bradley Stoke and North Yate, as well as mixed-use developments at Lyde Green and Charlton Hayes.

Opportunity:

- to increase the diversity and choice that is suitable for different families (like single, first-time buyers and older people) we have an opportunity to balance our existing housing stock with new styles and forms of housing, like apartments and shared types of accommodation

Issue 4: inequality and deprivation

The decline in the status of several of our urban communities, evidenced by underperformance in terms of economic activity and quality of life, has led to an increasing levels of inequality and deprivation in some urban areas.

Opportunity:

- plans for development, investment and change, present an opportunity to contribute to addressing inequality in our urban areas.
- to effect the change needed in some of our urban areas, working in partnership will be needed, along with potential master planning and regeneration initiatives – as well as a unified Council and partners approach in urban areas, and across all policy areas

Issue 5: loss of safeguarded employment land

Over the last 10 to 15 years, there has been a steady loss of safeguarded and non-safeguarded employment land, mostly to housing in the East Fringe of Bristol. This has led to an imbalance of workers to jobs, and the need for long commutes, with less opportunity to walk or cycle to employment areas.

Opportunity:

- as we plan for the future of our urban areas, it's important we ensure a balanced approach to the growth of new homes, with provision of employment land in our urban areas, potentially, for mixed-use development types

- we must also make sure that our remaining employment sites become more flexible and adaptable, and are set in a high-quality environment, to attract investment and opportunities from a range of business sectors and types

Issue 6: changing shopping habits

Over the past decade, we've witnessed significant changes in the way people shop, and these changes are likely to continue in the future. Increased online shopping and the decline of the high-street retail sector is having a significant negative impact on the viability of the traditional uses of our town centres.

Opportunity:

- a wider range of activities, uses, and more people living and working within easy walking distance of existing town centres, will bring increased footfall to retailers and businesses, and could help to justify the provision of new community facilities
- this will improve the viability of traditional town centres and high streets, while also giving them a new purpose and role in our communities over the coming years
- the public realm is an important part of any shopping experience - an attractive and safe space for pedestrians can produce an increase in footfall, dwell-time and spending

Issue 7: car use

High levels of car use, particularly to access employment opportunities and other key services, is leading to increasing pressures on the transport network, and causing significant problems with congestion, poor air quality, as well as inequality of access for some urban communities. The need for private car use also drives a need for higher levels of car parking, which takes up valuable development land. Instead, this could be used for enhancing areas in the public realm, green infrastructure and other key services and facilities. We may see private car use begin to decline during our new Local Plan period. If alternatives become more readily available and cost-effective, our Plan may need to consider flexible policy approaches.

Opportunity:

- There are a variety of alternative ways to deal with parking, including below buildings in basement levels, or within the footprint of the building at ground level as undercroft parking – these alternative approaches should be investigated as part of the new approach
- An Urban Lifestyles approach promotes high levels of walking, cycling and public transport use, and benefits air quality, health, and the climate emergency – making better use of urban sites reduces the pressure on greenfield sites to meet housing needs
- The linked issues of air quality, health and wellbeing, and the climate emergency, will need to inform the way in which urban developments are designed – a cleaner and more appealing living environment will enhance everybody's quality of life

New Urban Lifestyles themes

Existing policies in the 'Core Strategy and Policies Sites and Places Plan' guide the approach to development of our urban areas. Our policy approach to issues like design, open space, green infrastructure, parking, density, and mixed-use are applied across the whole district, rather than in a specific way in individual urban locations. We will need new planning policies to guide planning applications that come forward for development, and set out a strategy for investment, change, master planning, and the development of our urban areas, in the coming years. There are a few key changes that the new Urban Lifestyles approach aims to introduce into our new Local Plan and the supporting master plans.

Theme 1: Optimising density and making efficient use of land

In appropriate areas and on the right sites, optimising the density of development will be investigated. In most cases this means that there can be more housing and jobs, at a level that is higher than in the surrounding area:

- Rather than a single density figure, which would be an inflexible and insensitive approach, to apply to the different urban communities of South Gloucestershire, each location where an Urban Lifestyles approach is adopted, will be given its own density range, based on how accessible that place is, and the existing character of the area
- Information collected through this consultation and separate characterisation studies will be used to inform what an appropriate density range for each area should be

Optimising density will lead to an increase in the number of people, homes and jobs in some areas, particularly if much of the surrounding area is composed of lower-density housing, single-storey shops or low-level business parks, and single-storey warehouses.

Optimising density does not mean tall tower blocks – it means developments that are appropriate, and relate well to the built forms in the area, including a range of types and sizes of development, and uses:

- for residential development, this can mean more of a focus on the provision of apartments, rather than detached and semi-detached houses
- apartments can offer a more efficient use of limited development land, and can provide flexible living environments for a wide range of residents.
- this approach can benefit downsizers and younger residents who want to get into the property market by renting or buying their own homes
- apartments also offer better value for money, when compared to buying or renting larger properties
- apartments often require less ongoing maintenance and generally do not have flights of stairs as they are normally designed on a single level – this can make them a more accessible option for a range of potential residents



CGI for illustrative purposes only – Urban Lifestyles, Brabazon (former Filton Airfield).

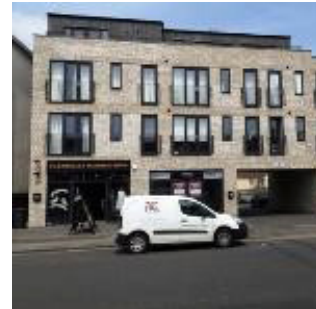
Credit:
LevelArchviz

Theme 2: mixed uses

Key urban sites often need to make provision for a mixture of uses, particularly on the high street and, where redevelopment of employment land is taking place. This is to ensure that jobs, homes, businesses and key services are provided, either on different parts of the site or, for example, living spaces above shops, businesses and community facilities like libraries. Mixing uses can have significant benefits for safety and activity, where people are actively using a development throughout the day and into the evening. Where an office or shop would attract people during the daytime, the apartments and houses would promote activity later in the day and into the evening, when shops and offices are closed.



Keynsham
Civic Centre
- Mixed Use
Development.



Staple Hill
High Street
- Mixed use
development,
optimising
density.

Theme 3: private amenity spaces and public realm

New approaches to ensure a minimum level of private amenity spaces, like useable balconies, small private gardens, and well-designed, accessible, public and private communal spaces will be needed on sites where densities are optimised. This will help to contribute towards positive living environments for residents, but will require clear approaches and responsibilities with regard to long-term management.

Because an Urban Lifestyles site might be developed with more buildings, it is important to make the areas surrounding the properties as appealing, usable and safe as possible. There will be an additional focus on the quality of the public realm that surrounds and supports these buildings. These spaces must be well-designed and landscaped and finished to a high standard with high-quality materials. Safety and security are also key factors, and areas in the public realm must be safe, in terms of perceived and actual safety, with good lighting and limited opportunities for antisocial behaviour.

Theme 4: internal living space size

New Urban Lifestyles' developments will be required to meet minimum acceptable internal sizes, referred to as the [Nationally Described Space Standard](#). This standard is currently only applied to some types of affordable housing. It is proposed to apply this to all types and tenures of residential dwellings:

- this will ensure that every home has sufficient space for comfortable living, including functional bedroom sizes, living areas, and plenty of room for storage
- the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that space that allows for comfortable home-working is a key consideration
- we must ensure that any communal areas are a good size and are well-lit by natural light
- Urban Lifestyles' developments must provide enough space to allow the easy sorting and storage of different recycling or waste containers

- a focus on communal recycling areas and spaces should also be made, for some apartment buildings and large housing developments

Theme 5: adaptability, views and natural light

Urban Lifestyles' developments will need to be adaptable, over time, to allow people of different ages with differing needs, to live in, and use them. Mixed-use sites that can accommodate a variety of uses and functions will be encouraged, in certain areas and on certain sites.

Natural daylight and views are important to consider. New Urban Lifestyles' developments must consider light levels by providing comfortable natural light, while limiting south-facing, and excessive, direct sunlight. Views from larger living room windows are a key aspect of higher-density approaches, as well as making sure that properties face in more than one direction, to aid natural ventilation of internal spaces.

Theme 6: reduced car parking

The level of car parking required, and how parking is managed will need to be altered. Because Urban Lifestyles' areas and development sites will be close to existing high streets, town centres, rail stations, major destinations and facilities on significant public transport routes, and the strategic cycle network in the North and East Fringe, a lower level of parking is considered appropriate.

Lower levels of car parking can mean that more of the site can be utilised for new development, open space, public realm and more focus on secure and covered cycle and motorbike parking, with shared private vehicles (e.g. car clubs) being more of a focus.

- a new parking policy (to eventually replace PSP16) is being developed in parallel with the new approach to Urban Lifestyles. This will include specific guidance that relates to potentially reduced car parking requirements, on appropriate Urban Lifestyles' sites and areas

What would an Urban Lifestyles development look like?

It would be designed to optimise density, when compared with the surrounding built-up area, which, in some cases could mean a slightly larger building type, or a different arrangement of buildings on site.

In town centres, and where employment opportunities, or services and facilities like healthcare, libraries and community facilities are required, it would aim to provide a variety of uses, all designed to interact. This would provide opportunities for working and living in, as well as space for key services and facilities.

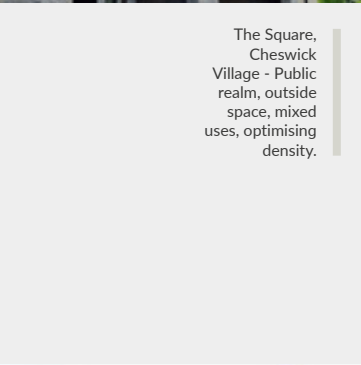
- Well-designed, to sit comfortably within the existing context, and respond to features in the local area, like valuable landscape features, key views and vistas of landmarks and the surrounding rural areas and landscapes. This type of development should be well-connected to existing streets and provide easy access to surrounding areas.
- Reduced car parking provision would be better integrated into the design of development, where appropriate, and where overspill can be managed. Increased bicycle and, possibly, motorbike parking options, would be an important part of any Urban Lifestyles' development.
- A diverse range of living accommodation and property types would be considered, depending on the size of the site, to cater to a range of potential residents.
- Minimise impacts on existing residential properties in surrounding areas, with regard to any overshadowing (blocking of sunlight) and overlooking from windows and balconies, to ensure appropriate levels of privacy.



Coopers Court, Yate - Optimising density and use of balconies for private space.



Greyfriars housing development, Gloucester.



The Square, Cheswick Village - Public realm, outside space, mixed uses, optimising density.



47-51 Broad Street, Staple Hill - Optimising density, undercroft car parking, amenity space on balconies.



- Every property would have access to some form of private amenity space, like a balcony for apartments, or garden space for houses. This would allow residents to sit outside or play in the open air, hang up clothes to dry, or grow plants.
- More activity on the streets, and more surveillance across the public realm, from windows, balconies and the front of properties would be created. Safe, secure and well-lit amenity areas will be a key feature, to allow residents to enjoy spending time outside in their local area.
- The public realm, including open spaces, will be well-designed and offer places that allow residents to enjoy being outside. It will focus on high-quality landscaping, materials, and green infrastructure, including planting and paving areas.



Gainsborough Square, Bristol.



Balcony and amenity space, Holland.



Blakfriars student accommodation, Gloucester.



New apartments, Monk Meadow, Gloucester.

Urban Lifestyles – locations and criteria

Development in our urban areas has been taking place for some time, and will continue to take place into the future. Our existing 'Core Strategy and Policies Sites and Places Plan' includes the policies for key sites in the urban area. We also have policies that cover the whole authority. But, our existing policies require the same approach to issues like design and parking, and amenity space across the area. We are proposing different policies, approaches and requirements in certain urban areas where an Urban Lifestyles' approach to development might be adopted.

However, not everywhere in urban South Gloucestershire will be appropriate for the new approach. An Urban Lifestyles' development will need to be near to key facilities and services, to allow walking and cycling, ideally on the strategic cycle network. It should also have high quality, frequent public transport connections to major destinations. It will need to be appropriate to the local character context and avoid doing harm to the built and natural environment.

We hope to propose the investigation of Urban Lifestyles' approaches in locations that are:

In and around town centres and high streets

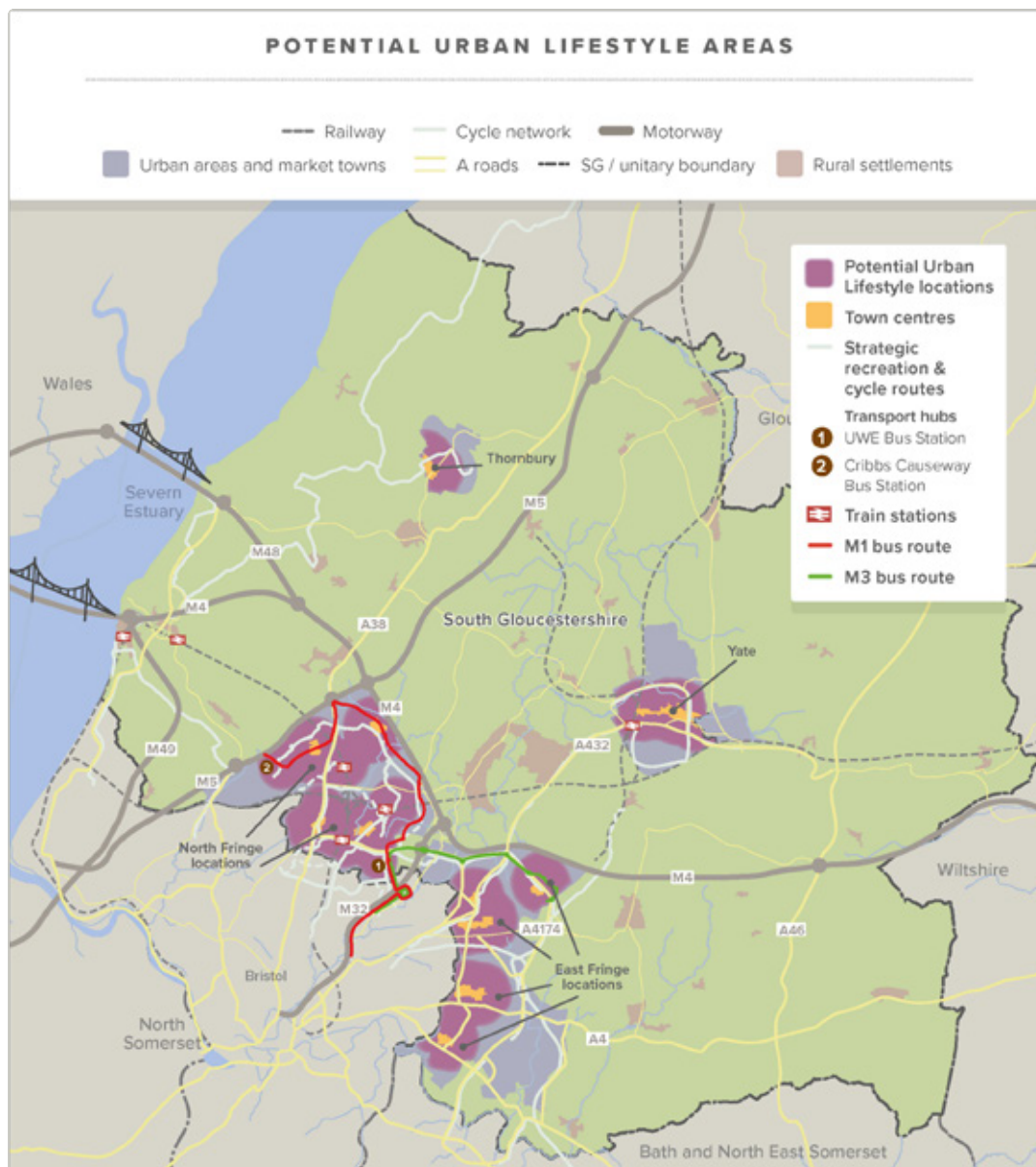
Our town centres offer great opportunities to access a range of facilities and services by walking and cycling. They also provide public transport connections to a wide range of locations. Maximising the opportunity and attractiveness of walking, and using cycling routes, has environmental benefits and significant public and physical health and wellbeing advantages for residents.

Everyone has different capabilities, and some residents may not be able to walk or cycle as far as others can. We think that between 800 metres and 1km (a 10-minute walk) is an appropriate distance to consider for how long it might take to access existing shops and services, and where Urban Lifestyles development might be appropriate.

Surrounding rail stations and public transport hubs (outside of town centres)

The Urban Lifestyles' approach of optimising densities can also be appropriate when people need access to high-quality, frequent public transport connections that access key services and facilities, and employment opportunities. Because of this, Urban Lifestyles will be investigated in and around rail stations and public transport hubs at Cribbs Causeway and the University of West of England (UWE). Development and regeneration in these locations offers opportunity to enhance the rail stations and transport hubs.

Cribbs Causeway and UWE, offer existing employment opportunities and some other facilities, they also provide a large number of public transport connections, including Metro Bus links to locations that meet a wide range of needs, like our town centres, Bristol city centre and further afield.



Suitable for the local context and character

In addition to having a high level of sustainable access to key services and facilities, Urban Lifestyles’ developments will need to respond to the context of each urban location, be delivered to a high quality, and avoid harm to the existing character and built and natural assets, of an area. It’s important to consider that each of the potential focus areas, like town centres, are different in various ways, with differing accessibility levels, characters, built forms and landscapes. Because of this, the approach to optimising development sites in each area will be slightly different. To assess the character and density of each area, we intend to carry out a series of characterisation studies.

We are developing a series of design criteria, against which any Urban Lifestyles’ development will be assessed. The design elements include private amenity space for all properties, minimum-space standards, and a new approach to parking provision, as key requirements.

A greater emphasis on the quality of the public realm is another important issue, with a focus on high-quality materials and landscaping. These requirements will need to be met, in addition to being in an appropriate location for services, facilities and public transport.

Areas of focus, sites and change

Achieving the Urban Lifestyles' vision will require a shift in future residents' and workers' expectations, and different delivery models, to focus on creating optimised urban developments, and the structure and character in appropriate parts of the district. This will require inspirational leadership to articulate bold ambitions and coordinate the actions of those who can play a part in delivery, potentially including new public investment.

To implement this new approach in appropriate urban locations, there are a number of ways development could be guided and happen. There will be a mixture of areas that are subject to change. Some of these areas may have bespoke new Local Plan policies and supporting detailed master plans. There are a number of individual sites we know about that we can allocate for Urban Lifestyles' development and set key criteria for. There is also development that will be available in the coming years – this will need to be considered against the planning policies that cover the Urban Lifestyles approach.

The Local Plan will need to:

- identify key Urban Lifestyles' areas, and then, sites for change through renewal and reuse – like better uses of existing employment sites, so that these can be redesignated for mixed use (e.g. a combination of new business premises and homes)
- consider areas for detailed master planning, where development and regeneration of wider areas is the subject of focused partnership working, to bring about Urban Lifestyles' development, regeneration, and area enhancement
- develop new policies to deal with optimising density, design, parking, private and public spaces, open spaces, and other issues that require a bespoke approach in Urban Lifestyles' areas
- identify opportunities for investment in our historic assets, public realm, open spaces and urban tree stock – so these existing assets, new open spaces, streets and transport routes become more pleasant places to be, while encouraging economic investment in walking and cycling
- identify the community services and facilities that would be required to support development, and how these would be delivered

Part ②

Urban Lifestyles suggested locations

This section looks at the urban areas of South Gloucestershire in the North and East Fringes of Bristol, as well as the towns of Yate and Thornbury.

The Core Strategy has a vision and policies for each of these locations (Policies CS25-CS33). We will need to review and update these policies to allow for the Urban Lifestyles' approach, as well as for any key sites, new transport schemes, new strategies and projects, such as Green Infrastructure or transport schemes, and any detailed approaches developed through master planning.

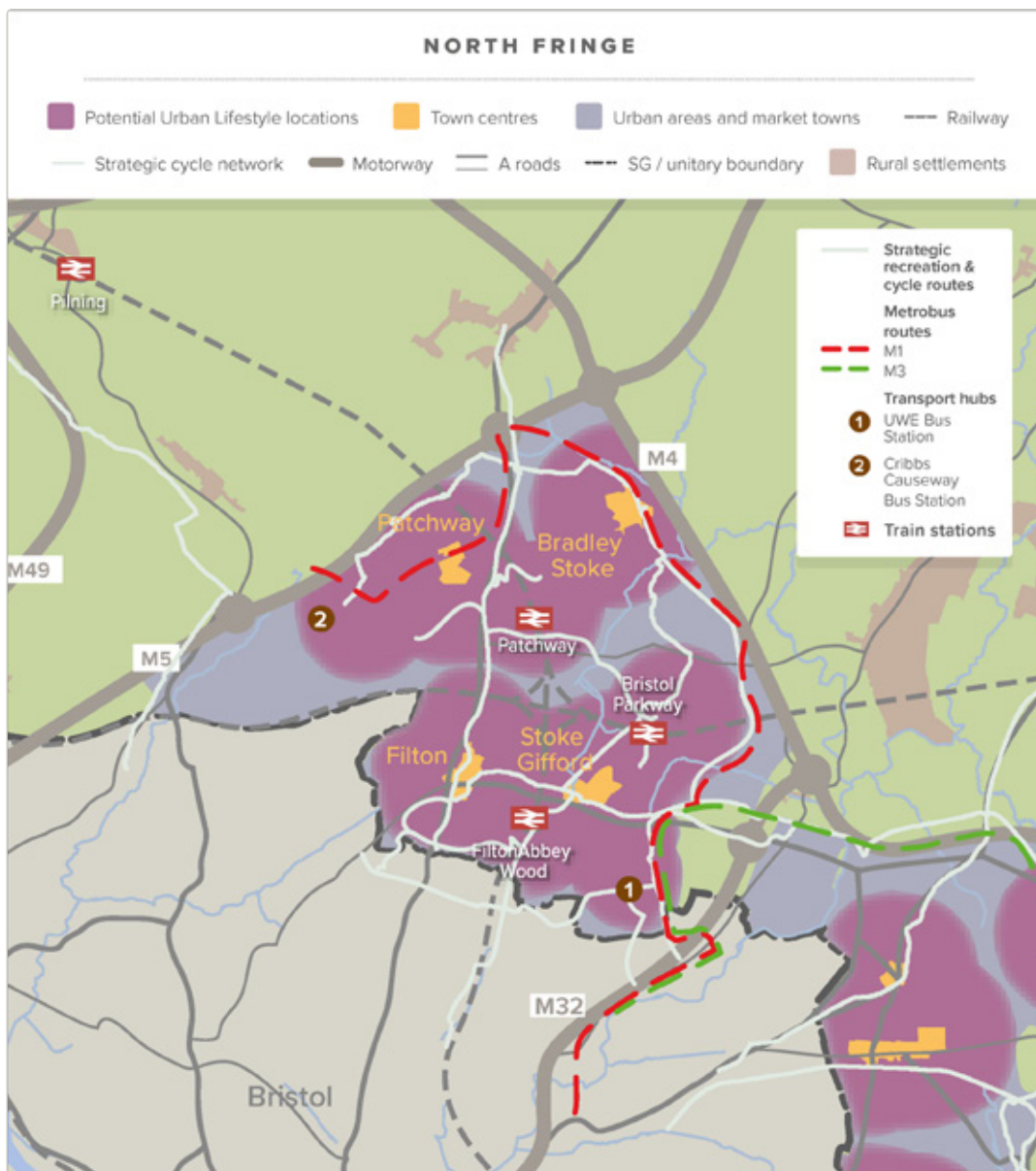
We begin by setting out the key characteristics of each of these places, and the issues that the new Local Plan strategy and policies should focus on addressing. There will continue to be development and change in each of these urban areas, and new Local Plan policies will be applied to assess and drive high-quality development. We seek your views on whether these are the right issues for each place, so that we can develop the correct local strategies and policies.

Having established the importance of the new Urban Lifestyles' approach, and what this might look like in practice, we also want to provide more information about the places in each of these areas where an Urban Lifestyles' policy approach might be appropriate. This is focused on the most accessible locations in and around our designated town centres, rail stations and transport hubs.

We're interested in your views on our choice of Urban Lifestyle locations, and the issues and opportunities of each. We'd also like to know about potential development sites and other key issues in your community that we should consider when planning its future, for the next 10, 15 or 20 years and more.

Communities of the Bristol North Fringe

The North Fringe of the urban area of Bristol in South Gloucestershire includes the communities of Cribbs Causeway, Filton, Patchway, Bradley Stoke, Stoke Gifford, Harry Stoke and Frenchay. The issues and opportunities that relate to the North Fringe and potential Urban Lifestyles' locations are set out below.



Local communities, housing, services and facilities

The area has developed as a series of distinct communities with a number of mainly suburban developments from 1930s – 1990s. Significant new housing developments have been recently completed at Charlton Hayes and Cheswick Village and more are planned within the new neighbourhoods at Cribbs Patchway (on the old Filton Airfield) and at Harry Stoke, increasing the size of the local population. There have been difficulties in the past with providing supporting infrastructure such as schools, public transport and community buildings at the right time, ahead of or alongside the development of the new homes. Integrating old and new communities and ensuring that the benefits of growth and investment are felt by all communities is important. There are increasing levels of inequality in some areas, with higher levels of unemployment and deprivation, partly due to changes in employment in the area in recent decades.

There are both further and higher education facilities within the area at South Gloucestershire & Stroud College's Wise and Filton campuses and the University of the West of England's main campus. However, there are ongoing capacity issues at SGS College which will need to be addressed as the local population increases. The urban area of the North Fringe is developing as a tourism destination with the completion of the Aerospace Bristol museum and a planned major new arena complex in the historic Brabazon Hangar at Filton airfield. There is also a cinema and leisure complex at the Mall and leisure centres at Filton and Bradley Stoke. These complement significant attractions in the rural areas adjacent to the North Fringe - Bristol Zoo's Wild Place and the Wave surfing lake.

Town centres and retail areas

There are a number of designated town centres and retail parks throughout the North Fringe. The Mall and surrounding retail parks also provide significant retailing and leisure facilities. However, some of the town centres require investment and regeneration to provide a better range and quality of uses, including living opportunities and improvements to the public realm, and open spaces as well as links to stations and centres of employment and education. In particular, the area between the MOD and Stoke Gifford does not maximise potential for optimising the density of development, or the range of land uses offered by the accessibility of nearby public transport corridors and the rail stations at Parkway and Filton Abbey Wood.

Transport and accessibility

The North Fringe benefits from excellent rail, public transport and road connections. Bristol Parkway rail station provides links to Bristol city centre, London and South Wales, benefitting from electrification of the mainline. There are two further local rail stations at Filton Abbey Wood and Patchway. Further investment in rail is planned, including improvements to Parkway rail station, the opening of the Henbury Spur freight line to passenger services and two new rail stations at Henbury and North Filton. Metrobus services connect North and East Fringes to Bristol city centre and South Bristol, with the planned Metrobus extension from Parkway to The Mall via Cribbs Patchway New Neighbourhood currently under construction.

There is a good network of local bus services and significant public transport hubs at Cribbs Causeway and UWE, which have national services, Metrobus and local connections connecting at their bus stations.

The North Fringe has direct access to the M4, M5 and M32 motorways, and is crossed by the A38 and A4174 ring road. The area has a good network of strategic, off-road cycle routes. In particular, the ring road path and Concorde Way offer good connections to major employment opportunities at the North Fringe, Bristol and Bath Science Park, and Bristol city centre. However, roads, rail lines and large campus-style developments with limited permeability, are a significant physical barrier to walking and cycling movement in the area. The pedestrian links around the rail station to existing town centres and employment areas could be enhanced too. Walking can be made less attractive by the sometimes-long distances between destinations, the proximity to major roads, limited crossing facilities and poor design of pedestrian routes. There is a need to plan for, and provide, fully connected local and strategic, walking and cycling routes into and through the area. We should also build on the potential of the existing network of cycle and walking connections, to help address climate change, congestion and quality-of-life issues.

Environment and green spaces

The most extensive local green space is historic Stoke Park, which lies to the south, and mostly in Bristol City Council's area. There are a variety of small local parks and informal green spaces throughout, and these could benefit from further investment to better meet the needs of local communities, as well as provide more opportunities for wildlife. Limited pockets of wildlife habitat and landscaping are fragmented across the area. In particular, the mature planting around the roads and campus-style employment areas, and along the railway lines provides the main green asset in much of the North Fringe. These should be protected, connected and reinforced to provide further benefits for local amenity and ecosystem services, as key sites are developed. Investing in Green Infrastructure connectivity in the area, including links out to the open countryside and beyond the motorway network, will play an important role in sustaining the optimised urban densities and their promotion.

Employment and commuting

The North Fringe is one of the most economically important areas in the south west and includes a number of significant employers and academic institutions. These include the aerospace cluster at Filton, significant numbers of office and service businesses around Aztec West, and high-tech advanced-engineering industries around UWE, that connect to the Bristol and Bath Science Park at Emersons Green (in the East Fringe).

Because of this, there are almost twice as many 'jobs' as the number of resident workers in the North Fringe (ratio of 1:8). While this offers significant opportunities for employment for many living in the North Fringe, commuting into the area on a daily basis is significant, and causes congestion problems. However, through the Core Strategy, a number of new large and small-scale housing developments are planned, which will increasingly help to address this imbalance.

Despite significant numbers of employers there has been a loss of manufacturing jobs over the past few decades, and this has contributed to inequality, with some residents not benefiting from the generally buoyant economy of the area.

Our new Local Plan will need to support the delivery of various land uses, infrastructure, and the place-making priorities of the West of England [Local Industrial Strategy](#) (LIS) which for the North Fringe includes the developing TEC ARC concept. The TEC ARC hopes to build on the range of national and local businesses in the area, as well as the key transport connections which have been put in place in recent years. This should also improve digital and physical connectivity between people and businesses across the North Fringe, UWE, and those at the Bristol and Bath Science Park.

Consideration of these issues will help us to determine what types of employment land, homes, supporting services and facilities/premises will be required to meet the future needs of business. It will also assist us when we consider whether some employment land can be redeveloped for mixed or residential uses under an Urban Lifestyles approach.

The challenge for the future in the North Fringe

The key role for our new Local Plan in this area is to attract investment, improve the attractiveness of the area as a place to live and work, and reduce inequalities through:

- optimising the density of development in accessible locations through the Urban Lifestyles' approach
- enabling new business investment and connectivity, focused on the TEC ARC concept
- integrating and delivering a range of new homes that reflect the range of people that will want to live in the North Fringe in the coming years
- planning for, and providing, higher-quality and better-connected green infrastructure and open space
- continued investment in public transport and digital connectivity, with improved walking and cycling opportunities, to link people and places of employment in the North Fringe to key services and facilities, including shops and retailers in town centres and retail parks in the area
- ensuring that supporting services and facilities, like community, sports and education facilities, are planned for as the area grows and changes
- providing more flexible and adaptable shops and services for residents and workers, through regeneration and master-planning, with a focus on creating well-designed places

North Fringe Urban Lifestyles areas

An Urban Lifestyles' approach could help with some of the local issues identified above, by providing new investment in more, and a greater variety of, homes and new local businesses, well-designed town centres with sustainable access facilities for local people, and an improved public realm with good connectivity. The quality of walking, cycling, open spaces and green infrastructure, as well as digital connectivity could be improved too.

The following locations in the North Fringe have been identified as being potentially suitable for Urban Lifestyles' development because of their accessibility, and their existing levels of services and facilities:

Cribbs Mall and retail / leisure parks

Cribbs Causeway has a very large number of public transport connections, including Metrobus, to locations across the district and sub region. But there are lower levels of key services and facilities nearby, such as a lack of GP surgery, post office, or any community centres (SGC Data & Access Profiles).

This area has potential for Urban Lifestyles' developments that take advantage of the range of retail and leisure facilities, and excellent public transport connections, to provide a greater variety of uses that includes new homes and employment opportunities. There is also potential to create better links to the emerging TEC ARC, facilities, in and near to the North Fringe, and improve and create green infrastructure connections to nearby countryside.

With a climate emergency and focus on new ways of shopping and traveling, in the future, there may be opportunities for more efficient uses of land, and the introduction of a greater variety of uses, by redesigning the significant areas of car parking and increasing density of existing buildings at the Mall at Cribbs Causeway and adjoining retail parks. However, this would require a significant redesign of the existing car-based retail environment, as well as investment and support from landowners, to provide access to a high-quality public realm, open space and services and facilities that future mixed use and residential communities may need.

Former Filton Airfield

The recent planning permission for a new arena and mixed-use leisure development means that a large area of the existing airfield permission is being reconsidered, and will now probably be delivered as part of the new Local Plan. Core Strategy Policy CS26 (Cribbs / Patchway New Neighbourhood) will need to be revised, alongside the supporting SPD.



Potential Urban Lifestyles Approach, CGI for illustrative purposes only – Brabazon (former Filton Airfield).

The Arena development and range of newly-planned transport improvements, such as the delivery of a new rail station, offers significant potential for the remaining undeveloped land to be used for higher-density Urban Lifestyle developments, mixed uses, new homes and employment opportunities. The Arena development also offers the opportunity to ensure significantly enhanced public bus and rail services, and walking and cycling connectivity between communities in and around Cribbs Causeway, and the communities to the south and east.

Urban Lifestyles' principles will need to be integrated into any revised and new plans for the former Filton Airfield.

Patchway Town Centre

Patchway town centre is a high street connected to its adjoining residential areas, and linked to the new development of Charlton Hayes. The wider area has a large number of key services and facilities nearby, and a range of bus connections to other areas (SGC Data & Access Profiles). Patchway rail station is also within 1,700 metres but the A38 dual-carriageway is a significant linear barrier to access for the local community.

This area has potential as a focus for Urban Lifestyles, with a role in creating more of a coherent centre and sense of place. There is potential for the optimisation of sites as they come forward over the next 15 years. There is some potential around Patchway rail station but the A38 acts as a strong barrier to movement and links will need to be improved across this highway to allow better pedestrian movement through the area.

Bradley Stoke Town Centre

Bradley Stoke town centre was completed in the 2000s and is well-located to serve its local community. It benefits from a Metrobus route through the area, and local facilities including schools, community facilities, a skate-park, leisure centre, pub, Tesco Extra and a number of additional retail outlets. The centre was primarily designed to be accessed by car, however, the area benefits from a variety of facilities accessible by walking and cycling and the public transport links available enables access to a range of other areas and centres (SGC Data and Access Profiles).

There are limited opportunities for redevelopment in the area surrounding the town centre given it was delivered relatively recently, but over the coming years, if opportunities do arise it would be a suitable area for mixed use, Urban Lifestyles development. Opportunities may come through optimising densities and diversifying uses in the town centre, to include new homes and other uses and possibly make use of the large areas of current surface car parks.

Filton Town Centre

Filton town centre is well situated to serve its community, and significant local employment centres, including Airbus and BAE Systems. It contains a limited range of local shops and specialist retail outlets, a hotel and library, and is connected to other locations by public transport and Filton Abbey Wood rail station. Filton Leisure Centre and Town Council offices are located nearby and a large range of major employers are in close proximity for walking and cycling to. Filton is also served by a range of bus services that connect to other areas in the district like Bristol city centre, Aztec West and Parkway (SGC Data & Access Profiles). However, there are issues with vacant shops, the quality of the public realm, pedestrian experience and walking connections, due to severance by major roads, from the town centre and, to surrounding residential and employment areas, including the Filton College campus and station.



Airbus offices, Filton.

Detailed master planning may assist in attracting investment and footfall by:

- facilitating better links between different parts of the town centre
- improving the quality of the public realm and making the area attractive for investment in the retail and leisure sectors
- improving pedestrian access to the town centre from neighbouring residential and employment areas
- identifying potential opportunities for higher-density housing, including long term change of use of some nearby safeguarded employment land, to mixed use and residential sites.

Parkway Station

Parkway station is a key gateway to South Gloucestershire and the employment hubs of the North Fringe. The recently completed electrification of the main line provides fast connections from South Gloucestershire through Parkway station to London and Wales. The station environs and surrounding area also include a terminus with a number of bus services that connect to Bristol and across South Gloucestershire. However, the quality of the public realm in and around the station, and the pedestrian and cycle connections from the rail station to surrounding urban communities, particularly major employers, key services and facilities to the south, needs to be enhanced. Opportunities to make the most efficient use of land on appropriate sites surrounding the station, along with the creation of a high-quality arrival point into South Gloucestershire will need to inform future plans for change and regeneration of the North Fringe.

Parkway Station to UWE

This area includes the communities of Stoke Gifford and Harry Stoke, including the Abbey Wood and Fox Den Road retail areas and designated Stoke Gifford District Centre. There is access to a number of supermarkets and retail outlets for the surrounding communities. However, the retail areas are geographically divided from each other by the A4174 ring road.

Stoke Gifford also contains two rail stations: Patchway and Bristol Parkway, and a Metrobus route. Stoke Gifford has one of the highest levels of access to public transport connections and facilities in the district (SGC Data & Access Profiles).

The wider area between Bristol Parkway rail station and the MOD/UWE to the south, includes all the elements needed to provide sustainable access to key services and facilities, as well as access to significant employment opportunities. However, these are dispersed and separated by large-scale, campus-style developments, and the severance caused by road and rail infrastructure. Parkway station is accessible to a large population, but difficult to walk directly to. The University of West of England (UWE) campus contains a Metrobus and public transport hub, but is difficult to access from surrounding communities because of poor walking and cycling legibility and route-quality.

This area would benefit from a long-term masterplan that sets out details of how the area might be regenerated to create a high-quality, more logical, and better-functioning urban environment. High-quality walking and cycling routes would need to be considered as part of this process, to connect major destinations, town centres, retail parks and employment opportunities, to transport hubs and rail stations in the area. This process could facilitate higher densities of development, including new homes, provision and enhancement of Green Infrastructure corridors and assets, and other Urban Lifestyles' principles.

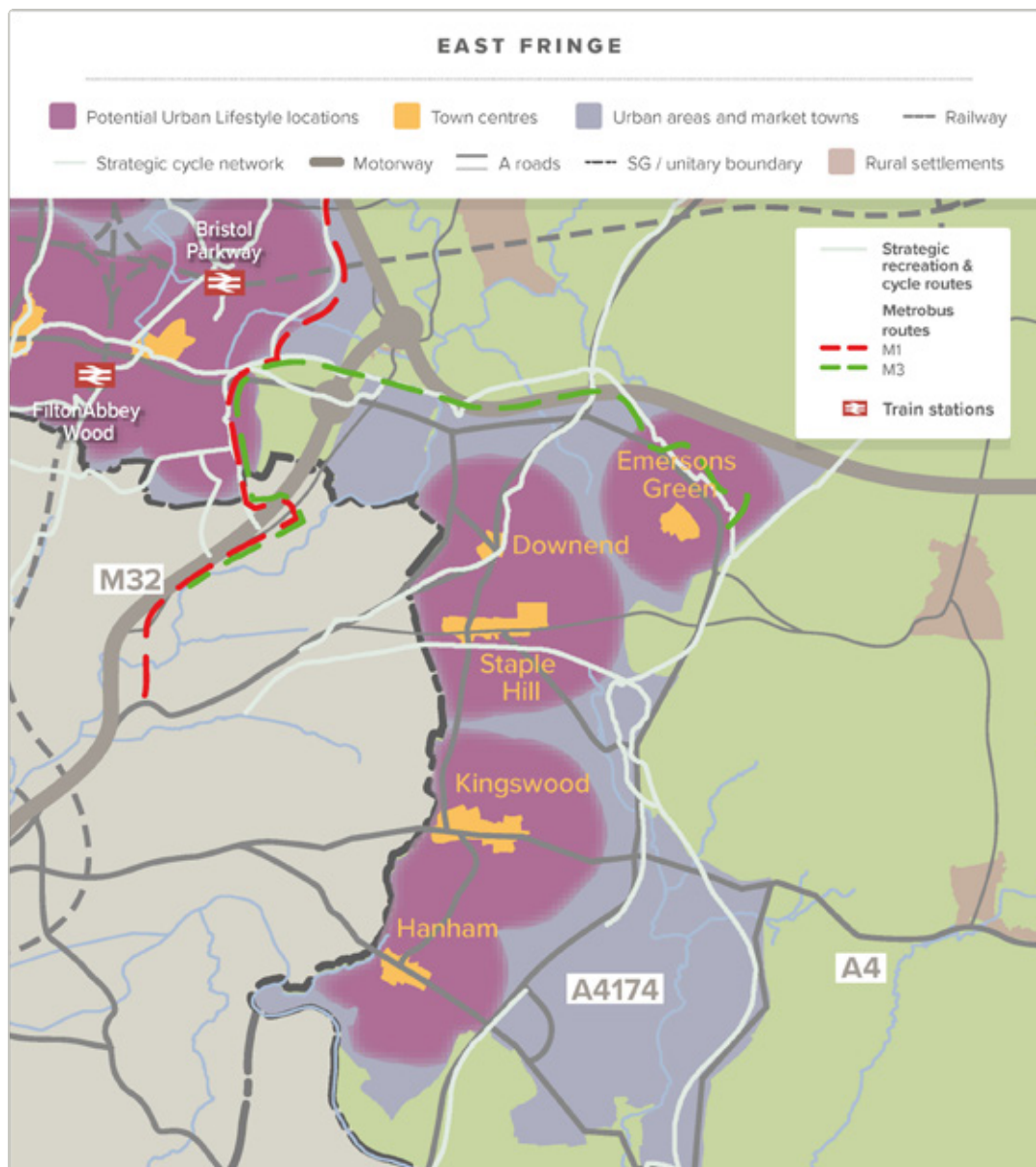
At UWE, existing planning policy (CS12 and PSP47) safeguards a large area of land for employment uses. This land provides potential for a significant Urban Lifestyles' development focusing on employment uses, with opportunities for enhanced connectivity between UWE and surrounding communities. Policies CS12, CS28 and PSP47 will need to be reviewed in respect of this area.

Communities of the Bristol East Fringe

This is the urban area east of Bristol City, and includes the communities of Downend, Emersons Green, Staple Hill, Mangotsfield, Soundwell, Kingswood, Warmley, Cadbury Heath, Longwell Green and Hanham.

Local communities, housing, services and facilities

This area, originally consisting of historic outlying rural hamlets and farming and hunting settlements, grew significantly alongside early coal-mining and manufacturing communities from the 18th century onwards. More suburban development followed from the Victorian period to the 1990s. Development was initially focused along the main road and rail corridors out of Bristol at Kingswood, Staple Hill, Mangotsfield, Hanham and Downend, and more recently, around the ring road at Longwell Green and Emersons Green.



Students must travel to Filton or central/south Bristol to access Further Education, as there are currently no facilities in the area. There is a leisure centre in Kingswood and a leisure centre and cinema at Longwell Green. Some communities in the East Fringe experience inequalities, and are among the most deprived in the district, with reduced opportunities for good economic, physical, mental health and wellbeing available. A new strategic and holistic approach to tackling inequality in our district is being developed and is recognised in the emerging Council Plan.

The area had a very significant role in the development of early industrialisation and non-conformist religions, and there are valued historic buildings and sites associated with its past throughout the area, including Warmley Brassworks and Gardens, Whitfield Tabernacle, and a large number of other listed and locally-listed buildings. However, there are also issues with a lack of interpretation/tourist facilities, neglect, decay and redevelopment that affect these heritage assets.

There are opportunities to redevelop the area as a cultural and tourist destination, building on the Avon Valley Heritage Railway and the Bath to Bristol Railway Path (which passes through the area), Kingswood Museum, and a restored Whitfield Tabernacle. There are also opportunities for further interpretation of the wider mining, manufacturing, and non-conformist legacies of the area.

Town centres and retail areas

There are five designated town centres, with traditional high streets at Downend, Staple Hill, Kingswood and Hanham, as well as a more modern town centre at Emersons Green. These are well-placed to serve their local communities, as well as residents of the rural areas to the east. However, these town centres and their high streets are suffering because of changing shopping habits and the gradual loss of their historic employment uses. Regeneration and investment in some of these town centres is required, to promote a wider range of uses that complement traditional retailing, offer new local-employment opportunities, and improve the quality of the public realm. It is also needed to create more resilient town centres that are better able to provide for their communities. Longwell Green Shopping and Retail Park also provides a large range of supermarket, clothing and DIY stores, with a relatively wide customer base, but in a predominantly car-based environment.

Transport and accessibility

Transport infrastructure is predominantly focused on the A432, B4465, A420 and A431 main roads, which run eastward from central Bristol. The A4174 dual carriageway marks the boundary for most of the East Fringe, with a triangle of development at Lyde Green and the Science Park, as well as the communities in the south east that jut out beyond the ring road into the open countryside and Green Belt.

The Bristol to Bath railway path provides excellent walking, cycling, and green-infrastructure connectivity to Bath and Bristol city centres, and runs through Staple Hill, Mangotsfield, Siston, Warmley and Oldland Common. It also connects to rural communities, and the countryside, from Bitton. The ring-road cycle path runs north to south, and provides connections to the Bristol to Bath Science Park, from there onwards, and west to the Bristol North Fringe. However, links from the more urban areas of the East Fringe towards the ring-road cycle path are often of a poor quality and fragmented. There is a good network of public rights of way that provide potential for more pedestrian accessibility, when compared to the North Fringe.

There are no railways or stations in the East Fringe (other than the Avon Valley Railway Heritage Line). Metrobus access is limited to the connections from Emersons Green and the Bristol and Bath Science Park, to the North Fringe and Bristol city centre. However, there are regular and direct services bus connections to the city centre from Downend and Staple Hill, which also connect out to Yate. The East Fringe is also generally well-connected to the North Fringe and Bath by public transport, but this requires a relatively long journey-time. Congestion is a problem and causes significant issues with air quality at Staple Hill and Kingswood-Warmley, that contain designated Air Quality Action Zones. Congestion also leads to long journey-times to access facilities and employment in central Bristol and the North Fringe. A new mass rapid transport route from the East Fringe to Bristol city centre is a long-term aspiration.

Environment and green spaces

There are a range of parks and green spaces in the area, including formal parks at Kingswood Park and Page Park in Staple Hill. Page Park has recently benefited from significant investment, and this has considerably increased its value to the local community. There are also a number of smaller, local parks and informal green spaces throughout the area which would benefit from better connectivity and further investment, to meet the needs of local communities, and provide more opportunities for wildlife. There are registered commons within the East Fringe urban area in and around Siston and Warmley, and nearby countryside, which have significant ecological and recreational value. The adjoining countryside is important in terms of its landscape value, the views from the urban area, and for recreation and ecological networks, including Warmley Forest Park, as well as valued areas at Hanham Hills and along the river Avon. There is an opportunity to provide better green infrastructure connectivity from within the urban area and out to the surrounding countryside.

Employment and commuting

The East Fringe area has suffered a steady loss of its traditional manufacturing employment-base and a loss of employment land to other uses. This has contributed to higher levels of unemployment and inequality than in other parts of the district. There are twice as many residents as jobs in the East Fringe (a job to worker ratio of 0.4) and this has resulted in large commuter flows out of the area. Public transport access to areas of employment in Severnside and the North Fringe is poor. The main new-employment development in recent years has been the Bristol & Bath Science Park which has successfully attracted investment, and provided new opportunities for high-tech businesses, but serves a regional employment-base.

There remains demand for traditional employment premises in the East Fringe, as these uses are displaced from higher-value land in Bath and Bristol. However, the supply of this type of land is limited, and continues to be lost to residential uses. There is a need to protect and enhance local job opportunities, provide employment land, and improve access to major employment locations in the centre of Bristol and the North Fringe, while simultaneously investigating the role that the town centres and high streets can play in providing land for new business investment, beyond traditional shops and retail.

The challenge for the future of the East Fringe

An Urban Lifestyles' approach could help with some of the local issues identified above, by providing new investment, more, and a greater variety of, homes and new local business. This approach could also help to regenerate town centres and high streets with a greater range of uses and facilities for local people, with well-designed buildings, public areas, open spaces and landscaping. It will also ensure that when key sites and redevelopment opportunities are available, the best use of available land is achieved.

The key role for the new Local Plan is to reduce inequalities, attract economic investment and improve the attractiveness of the area as a place to live and work, through:

- attracting investment and regeneration in the traditional high streets, focusing on improving the public realm, improving accessibility by walking and cycling, tackling congestion and air-quality issues, and widening the range of services and facilities to provide resilience in the difficult retail environment
- through the Urban Lifestyles' approach, promote well-designed, new development that optimises density, and provides for new homes and businesses in the most accessible locations
- improving local access to Further Education and training
- creating as a lasting legacy, a network of green routes that provide benefits to health, wellbeing and recreation, nature-recovery and water-management and quality, by enhancing access to, and the quality of, open spaces and parks, and increases connections and views to key recreational, ecological and landscape features in the adjoining countryside
- addressing the lack of local employment and the loss of employment land, by protecting valuable employment sites, identifying land for a range of employment uses, including promoting opportunities for modern working in mixed-use developments in accessible locations
- addressing poor accessibility from some areas of the East Fringe to employment opportunities, because of longer public transport journey times from some areas, to the North Fringe, Severnside and Bristol city centre
- improving the cultural tourism and leisure opportunities, including the conservation of key heritage assets at the Whitfield Tabernacle and Warmley Brassworks and Gardens.

East Fringe Urban Lifestyles areas

The locations for Urban Lifestyles' investigation in the East Fringe are focused in and around the designated town centres that have a range of existing services and facilities. Some have good connectivity to the strategic cycle network and public transport connections to other areas in the district, and the city centres of Bristol and Bath. In addition to the town centres themselves, there are sites near to the town centres that may also offer potential for Urban Lifestyles' developments and approaches. Potential opportunities may become available for more intensive use of land on retail and employment areas at Longwell Green Retail Park, and Bristol and Bath Science Park. Both of which are within walking distance of town centres and well linked for walking and cycling to surrounding communities, services and facilities.

Kingswood

Kingswood has a rich history and is notably considered as the birthplace of non-conformist religion, as well as having a rich and diverse industrial tradition. The High Street straddles the A420, borders the City of Bristol, and is surrounded by residential and employment areas.

Kingswood Town Centre suffers from traffic congestion and poor air quality. Public transport serves the area, although congested routes lead to longer journey times, and passenger facilities need to be improved. However, the area has one of the highest levels of key services and facilities nearby, for walking and cycling access, but does suffer from a lack of major employers (SGC Data & Access Profiles).

Part of the town centre is characterised by a core of historic commercial and religious buildings. Although many require maintenance or restoration, they provide a strong identity for the town. By contrast, more recent developments present a less attractive and tired appearance, including the well-used Kings Chase Shopping Centre and the now vacant Store 21, both constructed in the mid-1970s. As with similar town centres, Kingswood's retailers are suffering as a result of national trends in shopping habits, and increased competition from out-of-centre retail facilities, with vacancy rates increasing. There is a risk that, without change, intervention and regeneration, the shopping and town centre environment will go into significant decline.

Kingswood Park lies to the east of the shopping area. It is well-loved locally, and bounded by a range of community buildings and other facilities, including the former council offices, which retain a number of civic functions, alongside new library and café facilities.

Kingswood Masterplan / Love our High Streets project

To promote the regeneration of Kingswood High Street, establish a new positive identity for the High Street, and address issues of inequality while facilitating an Urban Lifestyles' approach, the Council and the West of England Combined Authority have invested £3 million in the 'Love our High Street' project. Part of this funding will be used to develop a wider masterplan that directs future investment and establishes many of the qualities that an Urban Lifestyles' approach offers, so that we can create a town centre that is more sustainable, liveable and resilient.

The master-plan work has established a number of specific objectives and areas for focused investigation, in addition to the broad Urban Lifestyles' aims. These include:

1. Strengthening the cultural and historic heart of the town centre around a new pedestrianised space, within Regent Street, and with direct links to the restored and repurposed Tabernacle
2. Improving the retail and business offer, in and around the Kings Chase Shopping Centre, with enhanced public transport facilities, and the addition of a greater mix of uses and appropriate leisure and residential developments
3. Increasing opportunities for Urban Lifestyles' developments by optimising densities of residential and suitable business uses on underused industrial land to the south of Cecil Road
4. Enhancing and connecting local greenspaces, like Kingswood Park, Southey Park and Magpie Bottom

Kingswood has also been successful in progressing to the Full Business Case submission phase of the Government's Future High Streets Fund. South Gloucestershire Council submitted a business case worth around £20m in July 2020. Further detail on the emerging approach to change and redevelopment in Kingswood, including the proposals set out above, can be viewed [here](#). Engagement and consultation on these approaches and ideas is taking place through the masterplan process and will inform the future proposals we present in our new Local Plan for the Kingswood Area including, individual sites and policy approaches.

Staple Hill Town Centre

Staple Hill has a designated town centre with a traditional high street, and includes a mixture of independent shops, small chains and national food stores. It has attractive, historic buildings, as well as some more recent buildings, some of which are of poor quality. In addition to supermarkets and retail facilities, there are a range of key services and facilities, including a library, and two Primary Schools in Staple Hill.

Although there is no GP surgery, there are three in Downend (SGC Data & Access Profiles). There are a number of public transport links that connect the area to Bristol, Yate, Bath, Cribbs Causeway and Bristol Parkway. Staple Hill and its town centre have the highest level of connectivity and proximity of all of the main town centres, in the East Fringe, to the Bristol and Bath Cycle Path. However, congestion issues on the high street cause significant issues with air quality in and around the town centre, and walking and cycling links around the town centre to the cycle path could be enhanced. There are also inequality and health issues in some of the communities near to the town centre.

The area benefits from access to the Bristol and Bath Railway Path and includes Page Park, a highly-regarded, award-winning, open space. Beyond Page Park, the town centre and high street would benefit from investment in the public realm, an increase in street trees, and the provision of improved, green-infrastructure connectivity to nearby parks and commons, and the open countryside. Although, within the heavily-developed area of the East Fringe, there are incidental, but key, views and vistas to the rural countryside, which include hillsides and ridges that provide visual connectivity to open, green areas and key ridgelines in the East Fringe.

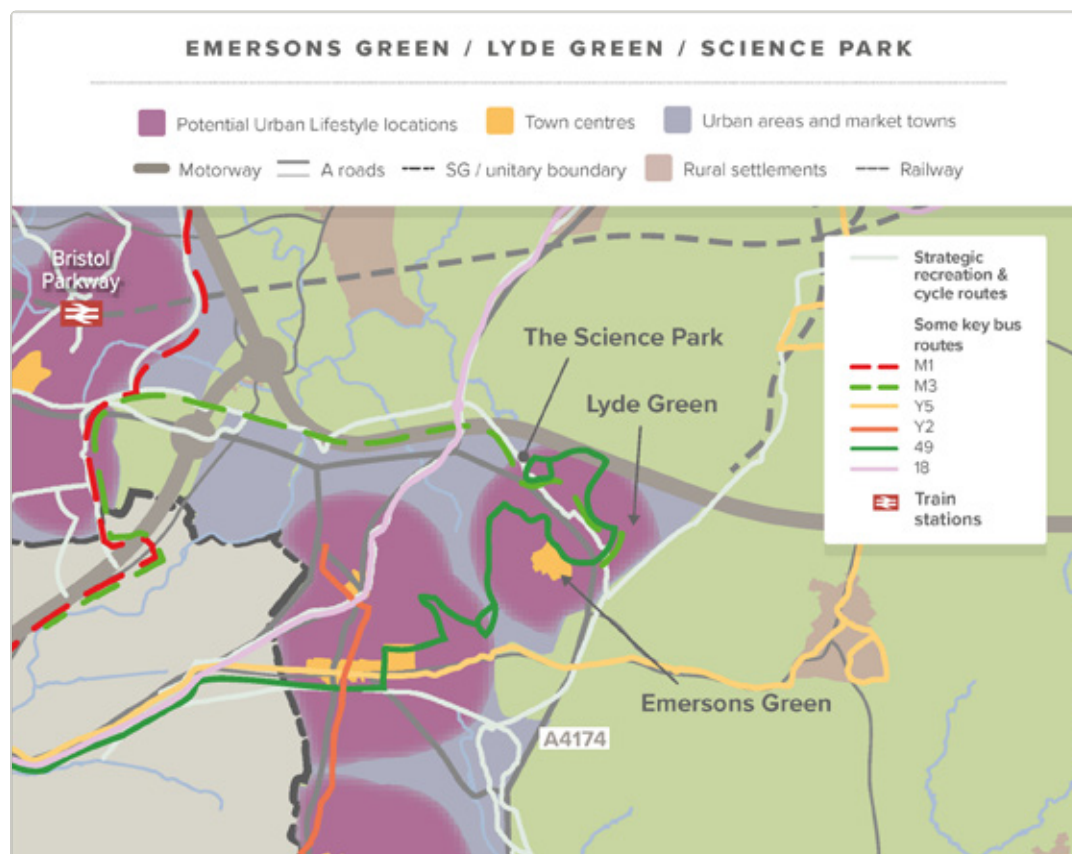
Over the next 20 years, the areas in and around the town centre could provide opportunities for Urban Lifestyles' approaches and developments, by the intensifying and diversifying of uses in the town centre, and enhancements to the connections to the Bristol to Bath railway path. This will include the potential to build above shops and optimise the densities of development sites made available on the high street. There may also be opportunities for under-used, commercial and employment sites, to provide mixed-use development, and provide homes and jobs.

Downend Town Centre

Downend is a compact towncentre with shopping parades along the A432, and a small shopping centre. It is of a smaller scale with less services and facilities than the town centres at Staple Hill or Kingswood, but still offers a good level of services and facilities, and includes GP and dentist’s surgeries, and a community centre within walking distance. Downend has public transport connections to a range of locations, including Bristol city centre and Yate – which for its size, offers a high-frequency and range of potential destinations (SGC Data & Access Profiles). The centre and areas surrounding, could be suitable for an Urban Lifestyles’ approach, subject to opportunities and sites becoming available. The process of optimising development sites would need to consider, and respond to, the existing character of the area, and protect the amenity of existing residents. This type of approach is likely to come through ongoing development in the future, and would need to be assessed against new Local Plan policies.

Emersons Green Town Centre

Emersons Green Town Centre was developed in the mid-1990s. The main car park, range of supermarkets and retail stores, follow a typical format for an out-of-town retail park, with large, single-storey unit stores on two sides of a very large, open, car park. This contrasts with the retail and community uses provided in Emersons Way, which have more in common with a traditional high street/shopping parade. Public transport connections from Emersons Green Town Centre are reasonable, and the area has walking, cycling and public transport access to the enterprise zone at the Bristol & Bath Science Park (SGC Data & Access Profiles). Although this is a relatively newly-built town centre, there could be potential to optimise density and introduce a wider range of uses as sites and buildings are redeveloped in the future.



Lyde Green and Bristol & Bath Science Park

This area includes the large-scale residential development of Lyde Green, which while offering community and education infrastructure, may offer limited opportunities for Urban Lifestyles' sites as part of the new Local Plan. The science park forms the eastern end of the proposed TEC ARC, and is spatially separate from Emersons Green Town Centre, and physically cut-off by the barrier of the A4174 – although pedestrian connections do exist, albeit limited in number. This is an enterprise area with a number of significant employers. Although there is limited land available, any commercial development sites that emerge will be expected to make efficient use of land, take advantage of the Metrobus connection, and make the best use of the pedestrian and cycling links to Emersons Green Town Centre and Lyde Green.

Hanham

Hanham town centre, is well placed to serve the surrounding suburban residential areas. It has a linear high street, originally of late-Victorian character, and a range of more recent additions and developments in the surrounding area. The high street suffers from a high level of traffic flow, and the traditional vibrancy of the centre has suffered from changing shopping habits and competition from the Longwell Green Retail Park. However, the high street contains a mixture of small independent and national retailers, and opportunities for food shopping with supermarkets nearby. A GP surgery, a number of pharmacies, and a community centre are also close to the town centre, for access by walking and cycling. Hanham has a moderate level of access to transport links and facilities (SGC Data & Access Profiles), with connections to Bristol, Longwell Green and Keynsham.

Beyond the town centre the area has key views and vistas south and east, into open countryside, and includes landscapes and hillsides at Hanham Hills and along the River Avon valley corridor that make a significant contribution to the character and form of the East Fringe.

Over the next 20 years, opportunities for Urban Lifestyles' approach and developments, through intensification and diversification of uses in the town centre may become available. This will include optimising the density of development sites that are made available on the high street. Within walking distance of the town centre, the former Kleeneze industrial site is considered to offer potential for an Urban Lifestyles' mixed-use development.

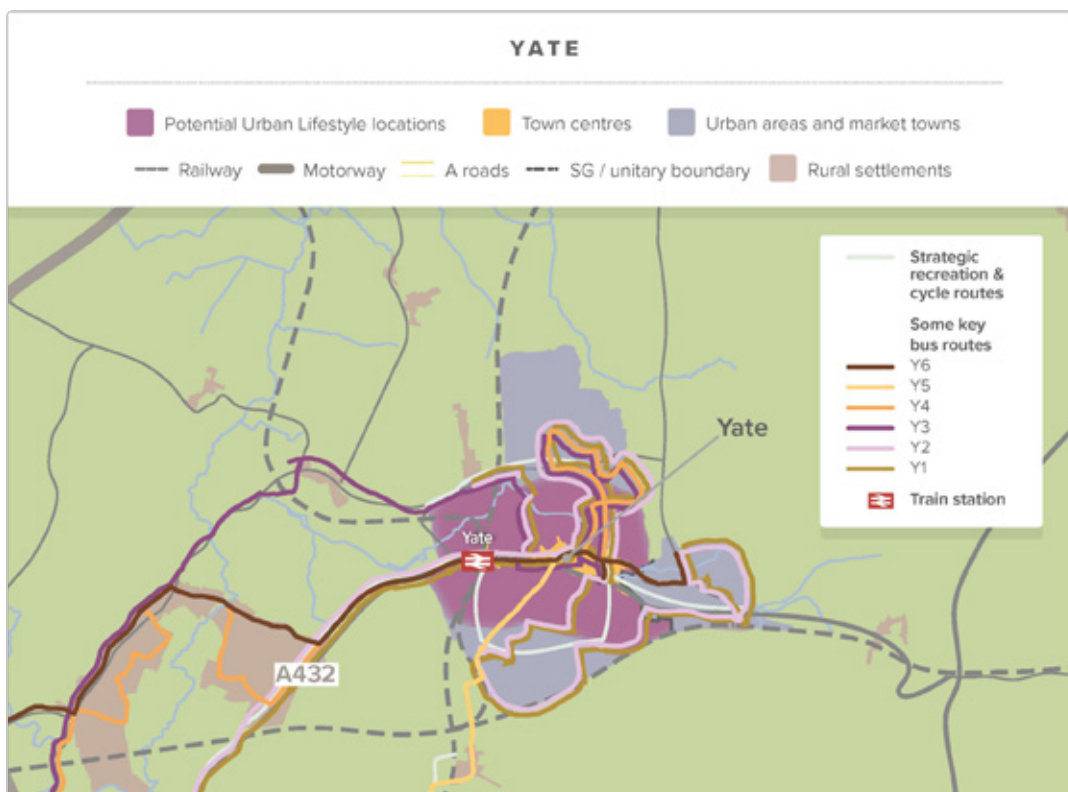
Longwell Green Retail Park

Longwell Green, on the south-eastern edge of the urban area, includes an out-of-centre retail area. This retail area was planned in the 1980s and includes large-format stores that sell DIY and household goods. There are also a number of smaller, and mainly, clothing stores. The area has public transport links to Bristol, Bath and Keynsham, however, links to the rest of the district are poor. Longwell Green benefits from walking and cycling access to a community centre, a wide range of supermarkets, three pharmacies and three primary schools, and near a cinema and leisure centre. However, with the exception of employment in the Retail Park and supermarkets, there are no other major employers, and no GP surgeries nearby (SGC Data & Access Profiles).

The entire area is functional in character and dominated by large-format stores and surface car-parking. Current opportunities for an Urban Lifestyles' approach are relatively limited. However, the area has public transport links to Bath, Bristol and communities in the East Fringe, and there may be opportunities, over the next 20 years, for more efficient uses of land, that introduce a greater range of uses, including new homes with a density appropriate to the location.

Yate

Yate is a successful market town with a population of approximately 30,900 (derived from the 2018 mid-year population estimate, ONS). It is located five miles from the urban edge of Bristol, and is separated from it by the Green Belt. It adjoins and, in many ways, complements the historic market town of Chipping Sodbury to the east.



Local communities, housing, services and facilities

Yate was first planned and developed in the late 1960s and based on the foundations of an older community. Growth has continued to the present day and includes a major new neighbourhood in the north which is still being completed. Housing is mainly low-density and suburban in character.

Many local students have to travel to Filton and Bristol to access Further Education, as there are limited facilities in and around Yate. However, access to South Bristol & Stroud College campuses via Filton Abbey Wood station is available by train from Yate, with the service set to be increased to a 30-minute service.

Local health facilities are available with a minor injuries unit, as well as a GP surgery in the town centre. Yate also has a leisure centre, outdoor sports-centre, cinema and the Yate Heritage Centre, as well as a number of smaller community buildings, including dedicated youth facilities, mainly located in the town centre and surrounding area.

Town centres and retail areas

Yate town centre includes the main shopping centre and extends along Station Road as far as Yate Station. The shopping centre, built in the late 1960s, provides a very good range of shops and services, as well as community buildings and health facilities. It is well located to provide for its local community, and also serves the surrounding rural areas and Chipping Sodbury.

Station Road is a continuation of the town centre and links it to Yate station. It is a mixed area, with residential, employment, retail areas and community uses, side-by-side, much of it at low-density.

Transport and accessibility

Yate station provides rail access to the North Fringe, Bristol and Gloucester. There is currently an hourly service, but improvements to services are planned. Access from Station Road is currently poor, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, and the station environment for passengers requires considerable improvement. Yate Town Centre is a hub for local bus networks and services to further destinations, including the North Fringe, Bristol city centre and Wootton.

Yate has a good network of cycle and walking routes, but access for pedestrians and cyclists to the shopping centre and along Station Road, is not as good as it should be. This has resulted in a large majority of people accessing the centre by car, despite the relatively short distances from residential areas. There is potential to significantly increase access by walking and cycling as a mode of transport within urban Yate.

Environment and green spaces

Yate has highly-valued green spaces and routes which could be enhanced and better-connected, to provide benefits for wildlife, health and wellbeing, and climate change mitigation and adaption. By investing in green infrastructure, we have a real opportunity to strengthen the connections between people and their local environment:

- the River Frome runs through the town from east to west – there are opportunities to reconcile ecological, water management and recreation issues along this corridor, with the aim of enhancing all three aspects
- the Common is an extensive area of common land that has important grassland habitat and recreational value. In the future, these two aspects will need to be managed and reconciled, as pressure increases from a growing local population
- Yate is surrounded by attractive countryside and includes areas of high landscape value in the Cotswold AONB, nearby to the east and including areas in the Green Belt – this provides recreational opportunities for residents
- there are extensive green walking and cycling routes in the town and local parks – improving this GI connectivity in Yate, and providing links to the surrounding countryside will provide enhanced benefits for nature recovery, as well as health and well-being benefits

Employment and commuting

Yate has relatively good local employment opportunities, particularly in manufacturing and distribution, with the main safeguarded employment areas to the west and north edges of the town. However, there are more resident workers than local jobs in Yate (ratio of jobs to workers is 0.7).

To meet the needs of businesses, and provide local jobs for a growing population, the Plan must make provision for existing and new businesses by:

- the safeguarding and redevelopment of existing employment land
- introducing more diversity to the town centre
- potentially, providing new employment-land alongside any new housing developments, or by replacing any employment land lost because of the redevelopment of the station area

The challenge for the future of Yate

The key role for our new Local Plan is to reduce inequalities, attract investment and improve the attractiveness and connectivity of the area as a place to live and work by:

- realising the potential of the shopping centre ‘island’ by master-planning and cooperation between landowners, including the public sector – this would aim to optimise the use of available land, and provide for a broader range of services, retail and leisure opportunities, as well as improved public spaces, to increase footfall, dwell time, hours of activity and provide new forms of residential and employment spaces.
- planning for, and providing, a much-improved walking and cycling environment, to and within the town centre, to achieve a shift away from car journeys from residential areas and achieve the associated benefits for health and well-being and carbon reduction.
- delivering improvements to Yate Station, to realise the potential for rail travel in Yate.
- planning for long-term, higher density, mixed-use development, around the station and parts of the adjoining industrial estates – to optimise density of new development between the station and shopping centre while respecting the character and amenity of existing uses, and providing new opportunities to live and work in this highly-accessible location
- providing for existing and new businesses, by protecting appropriate land for a range of employment uses, including new types of employment uses and businesses, and identifying land suitable for mixed use Urban Lifestyles’ developments.
- Enhancing and connecting the green spaces in Yate, including the Frome corridor and the Common, and connecting them to the town centre and wider countryside, and creating a lasting legacy of green and blue network routes that provide benefits for health and wellbeing, and recreation, as well as nature-recovery and water-management and quality.

Areas of Yate where an Urban Lifestyles' approach might be appropriate

Yate Shopping Centre

Built in late 1960s, the shopping centre is 2-3-storeys high, with retail and public services that face inwards onto pedestrian walkways, and have limited residential accommodation above the shops. Due to national retailing trends and changes in consumer habits, the centre has suffered from a loss of footfall in recent years, which has resulted in vacancies, particularly at the edge of the centre.

Buildings and public spaces require investment, and there is a need to broaden their range of activities and uses during the day and evening, to maintain the vitality of the centre and significantly improve pedestrian access to the adjoining residential areas.

There are a number of public buildings, poorly-designed areas and ineffective uses of land on the 'island' that are low-density and offer potential for reorganisation and redevelopment to optimise densities and increase the mix of uses. This includes homes and employment adjacent to the shopping centre. There is also potential in the main shopping areas for an increase in densities, and a greater mix of uses on upper floors.

The shopping centre is owned and managed by a single landowner, and there are also a variety of public-sector landowners in the shopping-island area. This provides us with opportunities for a coordinated approach to regeneration and redevelopment.

Yate public engagement - concept master plan (Oct 2020).



Station Road

Station Road formed part of the older core of Yate and runs, from the station in the west, to the shopping centre. It is of mixed character with offices, industrial, retail, residential and community uses. The buildings are mostly of two-storeys, with some elements of the heritage and character of the older settlement remaining. The route suffers from congestion and is an uninviting environment for walking and cycling. There is potential to increase density, but this presents problems with achieving design objectives and vision, and issues around respecting the amenity of neighbouring uses. A comprehensive strategy is needed to achieve a shift towards more walking and cycling along this route, including the potential enhancement for non-car-based users, and the provision of design guidance.

The variety of land uses and landowners means that redevelopment will happen in a piecemeal way, and over time. There is a risk that opportunities to achieve the community's vision for this area will be missed, unless there is a more coordinated approach to development. This includes more guidance on future uses, and design and character relationships between neighbouring uses. This would support the role of Station Road as a continuation of the town centre, linking the shopping centre and station, and achieve maximum benefit from redevelopment.

Yate Station and surrounds

There is currently an hourly train service from Yate station to the North Fringe and Bristol city centre and Gloucester, with planned, enhanced services to two trains per hour. This will help it to become a more attractive option than driving, to access the North Fringe and Bristol city centre.

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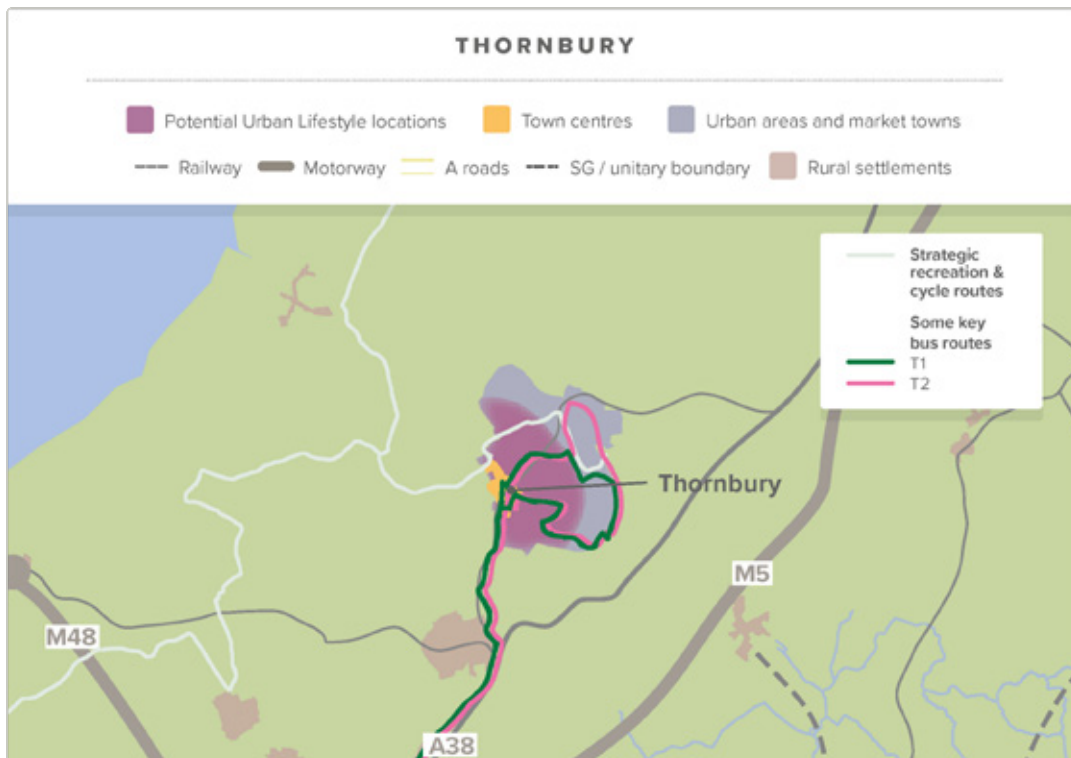
The station is currently surrounded by low-density employment uses. Optimising densities and the mix of uses in walking distance, and along Station Road and its surrounding industrial estates, could help realise this highly-accessible area's potential, with longer-term opportunities for higher-density, mixed-use development on some of the surrounding industrial estates. A Yate master plan is currently being prepared, and will include the investigation of potential approaches to improvements to the station and make efficient use of the land on the industrial estates around the station.

Yate Town Improvement Masterplan

The Council is working with local public and private sector partners on a [master plan for Yate](#), with funding provided by the West of England Combined Authority. The master plan will be an important document that shapes the future of Yate by setting out the long-term, detailed vision and objectives for the town. Building on the character of the town, the master plan seeks to unlock heritage, social, community and economic opportunities, and support investment in Yate in the future.

Thornbury

Thornbury is an historic, planned, market town, with a population of 12,200 (derived from 2018 mid-year population estimate, ONS) approximately 10 miles north of Bristol. Thornbury has no rail access, but has regular bus connections south to Bristol and north into Gloucestershire, as well as a network of local services to surrounding villages. It is close to Junctions on the M4 and M5 and to the A38.



Thornbury includes a range of key services and facilities, focused in the town centre, that serve residents, and can act as a service centre for the surrounding rural areas and villages. It has a very mixed town centre which retains its historic character – the centre is a designated conservation area. It has open areas of car parking and is surrounded by open countryside, including Green Belt protection to the south and west, and suburban development to the east. There are a high number of independent shops, often in smaller historic premises, on the High Street, as well as some national retailers, and two supermarkets.

Thornbury has a wide range of community facilities, including the Armstrong Hall complex, Thornbury Museum, Turnberries, and the Chantry community centres and a leisure centre. The Mundy playing fields provide a valued recreation resource near to the town centre. The town is surrounded by, and well-connected to, the countryside. Thornbury Castle is a Tudor Grade 1 Listed building, which is a destination in its own right, and adds to the historic and cultural offering of the town.

The Core Strategy planned for 500 new homes in Thornbury, but speculative development has increased this planned growth. This development has been to the north and east of the town and is increasingly further from the town centre.

This growth in housing, together with the loss of some safeguarded employment land, may have affected the balance between jobs and resident workers in Thornbury, which was 1:1 at the time of the last census in 2011. Car ownership and commuting levels are high.

A draft Thornbury Neighbourhood Plan 2019-36 has been prepared by the community, and is based on extensive consultation and evidence. The latest draft of the Thornbury Neighbourhood Plan can be [viewed here](#). The draft plan went through a consultation between 29 February and 25 April 2020, and the group are currently considering the comments received and making updates to the draft version. The neighbourhood plan sets out the key issues, vision, objectives and policies, to guide growth in Thornbury until 2036.

Once adopted, the neighbourhood plan will become part of the development plan, and be used to guide planning decisions, together with our new Local Plan, SDS and national planning guidance (NPPF).

The challenge for the future of Thornbury

There are a range and good number of services and facilities centred on the historic high street area. There is potential to optimise the density of future development that takes place in and around Thornbury's town centre, while taking into account the issues, vision and policies in the draft neighbourhood plan, as well as in national and local policies.

Key issues for future development in Thornbury are:

- protecting and respecting the heritage and character of the historic town and its setting, in particular the conservation area and listed buildings
- supporting the regeneration and economic health of the town centre
- providing new employment opportunities to help provide a better balance between local residents and jobs
- supporting the provision of key services and facilities
- as one of our two market towns, exploring the potential of Thornbury to meet a share of our overall housing needs
- providing new housing for young people and downsizers, that is affordable for local people
- promoting walking and cycling links in the town, and to nearby open countryside
- Protecting key views into, and out of Thornbury, as well as landscape features and enhanced ecological networks
- ensuring that any new development does not exacerbate flood-risk issues in the lower-lying land and communities to the west of town.

Questions

Do you agree with our Urban Lifestyles approach to investigate further change and growth in our urban areas?

Do you have any comments on the Urban Lifestyle approach to investigate further growth and change in our urban areas?

Do you agree the areas where the Urban Lifestyles approach should be investigated?

Do you have any comments on individual locations we have set out, or other locations which should be investigated for an urban lifestyles approach for further growth and change in our urban areas?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.



Creating sustainable rural villages & settlements



As we prepare our new Local Plan 2020, we want to have a discussion with our communities about how we might investigate and approach planning for an appropriate level of small and medium-scale growth in rural villages and settlements.

This work will help us focus on maximising the benefits of development, and enhancing the sustainability of our rural communities. As part of this, we want to understand, protect and enhance the natural and heritage assets that make such a valuable contribution to the unique character of our villages and settlements.

Through the Core Strategy and previous Local Plans, the majority of the planned growth of homes, jobs and infrastructure has been focused on the communities of the Bristol North and East Fringes and the market towns of Yate, Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury. Beyond these areas, a comparatively small amount of development has come forward in our rural villages and settlements through the planning application process, and it has been mostly limited to infill within existing settlement boundaries.

A disadvantage of this approach is that the historic pattern of incremental investment in the sustainability of our rural communities that comes from growth, has been disrupted. Because of this, progressively, the benefits of well-planned growth haven't been felt in our rural villages and settlements. Development can provide local market and Affordable Housing, new employment opportunities, improved infrastructure, including walking, cycling and public transport upgrades and it can also support local services and facilities.

In more recent years some of our rural villages and settlements have also been the focus of 'speculative' development proposals, which are usually promoted through planning applications. This growth and change has not been arrived at through a plan-led strategy, and often, without a comprehensive understanding of the needs of, or support from, the communities in which they are proposed.

Our rural areas include many natural assets, like sites designated for their ecological value, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – designated for its distinctive landscape character and natural beauty, the Severn Estuary, protected by a range of nature conservation designations due its important habitats and species, and green infrastructure – which is important to create a sense of place that connects communities to the countryside and provides space for wildlife to thrive in. Our rural areas are also home to a wide range of heritage assets, including conservation areas, listed buildings and sites of archaeological value. There are also landscape features like valleys, hillsides and escarpments, all of which help to create valuable, historic landscapes and distinctive places. A large area of rural South Gloucestershire is also designated as Green Belt.

As we consider our approach to planning for our rural areas, and the villages and settlements in them, we need to balance all of these issues and considerations, and make choices about where new homes, jobs and facilities should go, so that our rural communities can thrive.

Existing issues in our rural communities

In Section 3 of this document we discuss the issues that face all of South Gloucestershire, that need to be considered as we plan for the future. We think that some of these issues are of particular relevance to our rural areas and they are explored below.

Meeting the challenge of climate change is of central importance to the way we must plan for growth. It is an objective of national planning policy, and its importance locally has been further emphasised through the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019. Our new Local Plan has an important part to play in the Council's response to this issue, by promoting development which reduces the impacts of climate change. When considering rural growth, we think this includes:

- focusing rural growth in locations that aren't completely dependent on private car use to access key services and facilities
- maximising opportunities for development in locations that have good walking, cycling or public transport and digital connections to access key services and facilities
- exploring opportunities that contribute to achieving key plan priorities around the creation of nature recovery and green infrastructure networks
- providing for biodiversity offsetting and for renewable energy generation.



Issue 1: Climate change mitigation;
Issue 2: Climate change adaption and resilience;
Issue 41: Decarbonising transport;
Issue 43: Walkable neighbourhoods – access to key services and facilities in our rural areas.

The population of South Gloucestershire is projected to continue to grow, as is the number and proportion of older people. Many of our rural communities have a relatively older population than the local or national average. Our new Local Plan will need to think about how our rural communities can play a part in supporting population growth and change, and in doing so increase their social sustainability.

We'll need to consider if more purpose built, specialist homes and a wider choice of accommodation for older people is needed. We'll also need to make sure that new homes are adaptable and accessible, and provide opportunities for people to live independently and stay in their communities as they age.



**Issue 27: Identifying the amount of new homes to plan for;
Issue 28: Homes to meet the needs of our ageing population.**

It is common in rural communities, that access to a choice of housing, in particular Affordable Housing, specialist housing and smaller-market housing, is an issue. This can make it difficult, particularly for younger people and families and people on lower incomes who want to remain in, or move to, our rural communities. We'll need to look at evidence for specific sizes, types and tenures of homes in rural areas, including self-build and custom housebuilding and the potential for Community Land Trusts and other forms of delivery, to provide an affordable alternative for local communities.



**Issue 29: Housing affordability;
Issue 30: Planning for different groups.**

Over the last 30 years, planned growth has been focussed on larger sites in locations next to the existing urban area at the North and East Fringes of Bristol and the market towns of Thornbury and Yate. As a result, the benefits of growth have been directed to a limited number of places.

Additionally, over-reliance on a small number of large sites has weakened the resilience of our housing land supply, as these larger sites haven't delivered the homes and jobs as quickly as promised, by their promoters, when the Core Strategy was developed. The impact of this has been an increase in speculative development proposals in some rural communities. These are put forward and justified, in part, by the need to make up for the shortfall in delivery on the larger sites in the short to medium term. At the same time, many of our rural communities have seen comparatively low rates of growth, which has created problems with the availability, choice and affordability of homes, impacting on the mix and balance of communities and local services and facilities.

Following changes to national planning policy in 2019, we're now required to accommodate at least 10% of new homes on sites that are no larger than one hectare in size. Through our new Local Plan we will look to increase the amount of growth brought forward from small and medium-sized sites. This will reduce the risk of reliance on speculative planning applications to bolster housing supply when delivery on large sites is unexpectedly delayed.

As part of this, we're already investigating how greater levels of growth can be accommodated in our urban areas, and you can read about this in section 5. We think this provides an opportunity to think about growth in our rural communities and the contribution they can make in helping to meet this requirement and investigate the potential benefits growth can bring to these communities.

Beyond the urban areas, we want to investigate how we can provide a range of small and medium-scale sites in our rural communities, and how we might approach that. This could support the sustainability of rural communities, meet a range of housing needs, and help them overcome their individual challenges.

Planning for some level of growth, like new homes, employment and key services and facilities, in appropriate rural villages and settlements, can play an important role in making sure that the long term vitality, vibrancy and overall sustainability of our rural communities is maintained by:

- increasing opportunities for home ownership and renting for younger people, families and an increasingly ageing population that want to stay in, or move back to, their communities
- increasing access to education and employment opportunities in easy reach of where people live
- supporting the long-term sustainability and success of education facilities, particularly those rural primary schools that have seen a decline in class sizes in recent years
- supporting existing and/or enhanced key services and facilities in rural communities, like local shops, community centres, public houses, broadband connectivity, local employment opportunities, and the viability of public transport connections to towns and urban areas.

This approach could help stimulate new sources of supply, like smaller, local builders, private individuals, community-led housing schemes or through proposals for 'self-build', or those who are unable or unwilling to develop larger sites. As discussed above, this might also support the local economy, by providing and safeguarding jobs in the construction industry, to support the post Covid-19 economic and social recovery.



Issue 32: Issues with housing delivery on large scale sites;
Issue 33: Five year housing land supply;
Issue 34: Small site requirement;
Issue 26: Growth in rural villages and settlements.

Local Plan 2020 – this consultation

Based on the opportunities and issues identified in this document, we want to discuss an approach that seeks to improve the long-term sustainability of our rural communities. We want to explore what we need to think about, if an appropriate level of small or medium-scale growth in our rural villages and settlements, is to form part of the new Local Plan.

Initially we think that unless there are significant constraints, sustainability, or other key issues, that every rural community should be investigated and considered. This will help decide the part these communities might be able to play in contributing to and benefitting from plan-led growth.

Our Local Plan 2020 will in future stages of consultation need to identify specific sites in individual villages and settlements, to be allocated for new homes and/or employment opportunities and, potentially other important land uses.

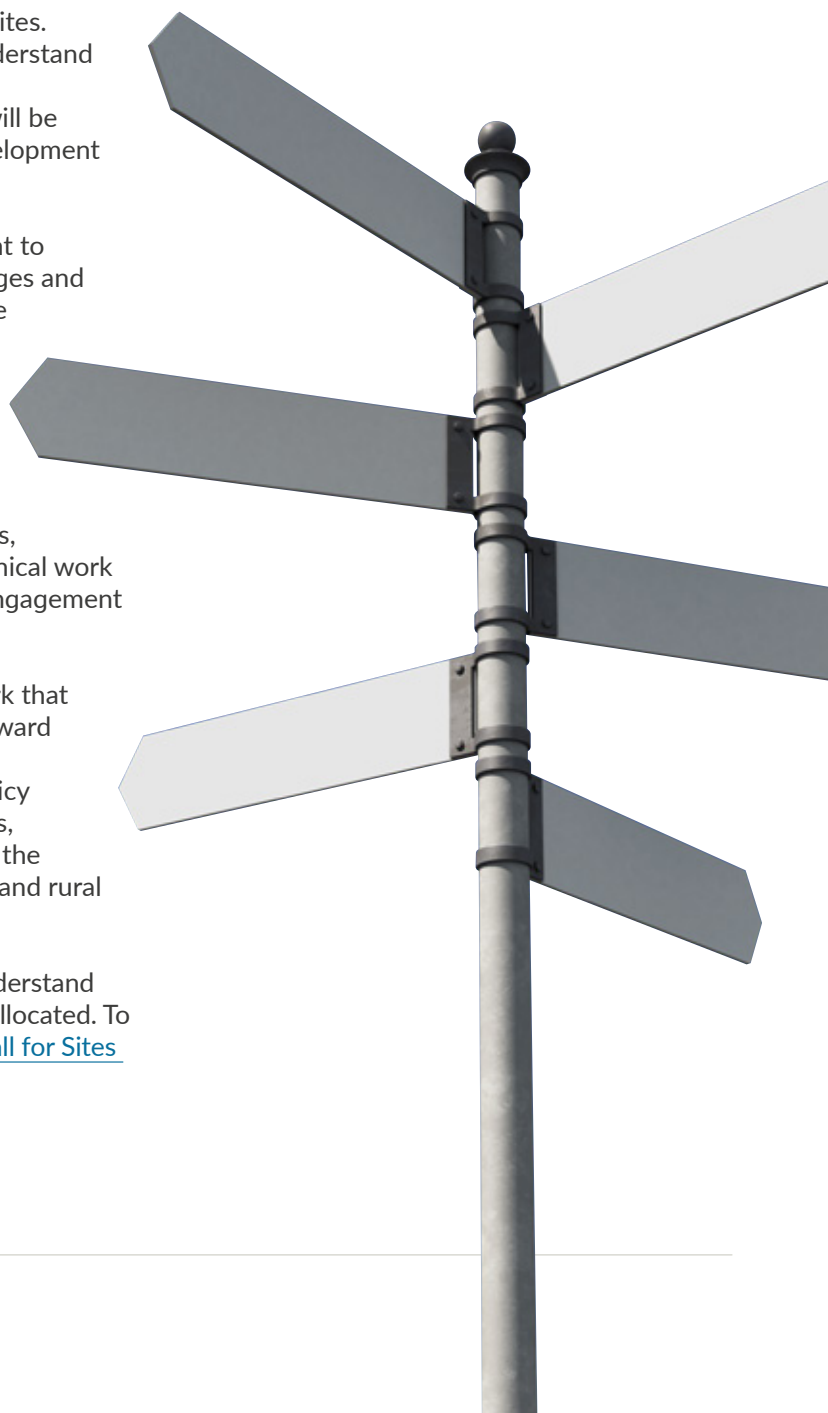
We can't discuss what level of growth might be appropriate in individual rural villages/ settlements at the moment, or the merits of individual sites. Before we can start do this, we need to understand the overall growth target that we'll need to accommodate in our new Local Plan. This will be set out in the West of England Spatial Development Strategy (see section 5).

But as part of this first consultation we want to discuss how we might consider; which villages and settlements might be suitable to investigate for growth, and what level of growth might be appropriate in those villages and settlements.

By taking a 'plan-led' approach to potential growth and change in our rural communities, we can fully discuss the issues, supported by evidence gathered from technical work and through a programme of community engagement and public consultation.

We also want to develop a policy framework that allows for rural exception sites to come forward in response to community identified needs and community-led proposals. The new policy framework will cater for specific rural issues, including the promotion and sustenance of the rural economy, horse-related development and rural worker's dwellings.

In preparing a new Local Plan, must also understand which sites might have the potential to be allocated. To do this, we have recently undertaken the [Call for Sites 2020](#), to identify sites.



These sites will have to be assessed through the [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment \(HELAA\)](#).

When this work has been completed, we'll be able to begin to look at potential options at a village and settlement level. We will present the outputs of this work through a Local Plan 2020 - Phase 2 consultation document, which we hope will be available in Autumn 2021.

What do we mean by planning for small and medium scale growth in our rural communities?

When we talk about 'small and medium-scale growth', we are referring to planned growth, which is appropriate and proportionate to the size and scale of existing rural communities. We want to make sure that there is a balance between the potential benefits of growth and the need to ensure we protect and enhance existing character and built, natural and community assets.



The Plan is in its early stages and we don't have a precise number of homes, or amount of employment land, in mind for any individual village or settlement. It is important, at this stage, to stress that any small or medium-scale growth proposed through this part of the Local Plan should not be of a scale that might lead to a strategic level change for any community, or require the provision of additional strategic infrastructure.

Generally, when we talk about 'growth' in rural areas we mean sites that, as a minimum, can provide five homes or more. Or, opportunities that provide employment uses on sites of 0.25 hectares, or 500 square metres of floor space and more. We must allocate this growth through future stages of the Local Plan.

It is also important to note that any proposed growth should be 'appropriate' for the village or settlement it is located in. By this, we mean that it should be proportionate and sensitive to the village or settlement's sustainability, and take into account any potential impacts on its character and function over the next 10, 15 and possibly 20 years. Because of this, we aren't yet able to define a maximum number of new homes or jobs that might be considered small to medium-scale, because this will depend on the individual village or settlement, and how any new growth might play a part in supporting its sustainability. What is appropriate will differ from place to place, and could be based on a number of sustainability, planning and local considerations.

We want to discuss and explore this with you, and you can find out more below.

We are aware that, separate to any growth proposed through the Local Plan, communities may also want to consider opportunities to promote sustainable growth with a rural exception site or by preparing a neighbourhood plan. These methods may offer another way, beyond the Local Plan process, to promote growth and change, and meet needs identified by rural communities.

As well as this, opportunities to bring forward development on infill sites, or sites within settlement boundaries could come forward through the development management process.

What about large scale growth in rural communities?

Through previous plan making and ‘Call for Sites’, proposals have been submitted to us for consideration of larger-scale planned growth in, or near, our rural villages and settlements. These are typically, but not exclusively, sites that would bring about very significant change for an individual village or settlement, or require strategic levels of infrastructure to be developed.



Any sites of this type/ scale submitted through the recent Call for Sites will need to be assessed, and then considered through preparing the Local Plan 2020. We understand this can be challenging for communities who might not support proposals like this, either in principle, or due to their specific impacts. It is important to note that no decisions about whether individual sites should be allocated will be made until they have been given appropriate consideration in future stages of preparing our new Local Plan and have been subject to public consultation.

In section 5 of this document, we explore and discuss the possible guiding principles we may use to investigate potential locations for large-scale growth. After this consultation, we will gather more evidence and technical information, before we present the options for villages, settlements or locations that might be investigated for larger-scale growth through our Phase 2 consultation document. We hope to release this document in Autumn 2021.

The potential to deliver larger-scale growth might be an option in some of our rural villages and settlements instead of, or in addition to, any proposals for small and medium-scale growth.

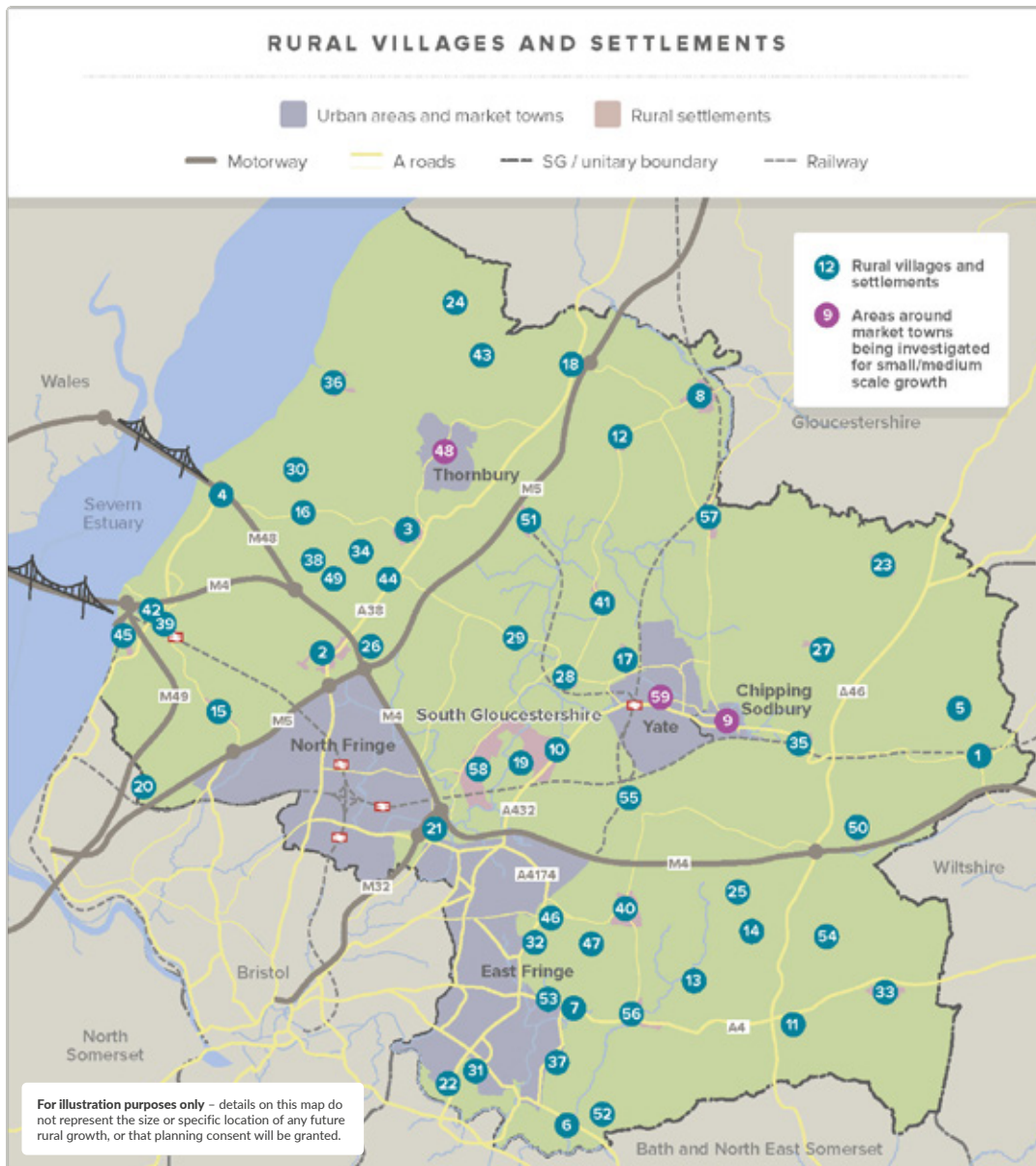
As our new Local Plan progresses, we will clearly state which rural villages and settlements will be investigated for large-scale growth, as well as those we are considering for small and medium-scale growth.

Where should we investigate for growth in our rural areas?

As we begin to investigate potential and appropriate levels of growth in our rural communities, we want to consider the following locations:

- in and around all villages and settlements with a defined settlement boundary, or, recognised collections of dwellings²⁵, and areas around the edges of market towns
- areas where sites have been identified through previous calls for sites, up to 200 metres from the edges of urban areas.

²⁵ Villages and settlements with existing settlement boundaries, defined on the Policies Map and considered for settlement boundaries or growth as part of the Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) Plan rural housing review have been included in the initial list of villages, settlement and rural places.



KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES	KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES
1	Acton Turville	156	31	Longwell Green	*
2	Almondsbury	640	32	Mangotsfield	*
3	Alveston	1055	33	Marshfield	626
4	Aust	37	34	Old Down	81
5	Badminton	114	35	Old Sodbury	122
6	Bitton	318	36	Oldbury-on-Severn	93
7	Bridgegate	25	37	Oldland	*
8	Charfield	1072	38	Olveston	396
9	Chipping Sodbury	2181	39	Pilning	316
10	Coalpit Heath	812	40	Pucklechurch	960
11	Cold Ashton	36	41	Rangeworthy	182
12	Cromhall (Bibstone and Townwell)	141	42	Redwick	55
13	Doynton	82	43	Rockhampton	33
14	Dyrham	26	44	Rudgeway	99
15	Easter Compton	231	45	Severn Beach	885
16	Elberton	39	46	Shortwood	73
17	Engine Common	117	47	Siston	30
18	Falfield	142	48	Thornbury	5768
19	Frampton Cotterell	2621	49	Tockington	140
20	Hallen	94	50	Tormarton	73
21	Hambrook	50	51	Tytherington	181
22	Hanham	*	52	Upton Cheyney	62
23	Hawkesbury Upton	354	53	Warmley	*
24	Hill	26	54	West Littleton	28
25	Hinton	42	55	Westerleigh	182
26	Hortham Village	293	56	Wick	626
27	Horton	66	57	Wickwar	585
28	Iron Acton	197	58	Winterbourne	2547
29	Latteridge	18	59	Yate	13027
30	Littleton upon Severn	42			

* Point outside urban area.

Are all of these locations sustainable and appropriate for investigation for planned growth?

Working with our communities we want to discuss how we investigate potentially appropriate levels of small to medium-scale growth that could be allocated in our new Local Plan. Because of significant constraints and sustainability issues, it might not be appropriate to propose growth through the Local Plan in some of these locations. Instead, it might be appropriate for growth, to meet an identified local need for homes or jobs, to be brought forward through a neighbourhood plan or a community-led rural exception site.

As we begin to think about what level of growth might be appropriate in our villages and settlements, we want to discuss a range of key principles that could inform and aid the investigation and discussion of this topic.

Investigating ‘appropriate’ small and medium-scale growth

As detailed in section 3 of this document there are some key sustainability and planning policy issues which are important in our rural areas and will help us to determine appropriate levels of growth in individual villages and settlements.

122

We think the key considerations include:

1. the size of existing village and settlements – relating to populations and the number of existing homes
2. The level of planned and speculative growth that has been built or approved in individual communities in recent years, if applicable

We will use information relating to demographics and planning at village/ settlement level to aid our understanding of these considerations across our rural communities.

3. The suitability and capacity of existing infrastructure and, any potential requirement for new utilities infrastructure – especially sewerage, water, power and gas
4. Key sustainability issues – sustainable access to key services and facilities, small and rural schools, and access to superfast broadband

We explore these in this section, in more detail below.

5. Key planning designations and considerations;
 - Flood Risk, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt
 - Impact on important ecological, heritage, local landscape assets and character.

More information on how we want to approach these issues is discussed below.

Key sustainability issues

Initially, we think sustainable travel for access to services and facilities should be a primary consideration because it relates to the guiding principles presented in section 5 of this document. This means we should make choices about what an appropriate level of growth in individual villages or settlements might be, based on the principle of minimising reliance on private car journeys, while considering:

- proximity to key services and facilities, including employment, retail, education and community, health and education facilities by walking and cycling
- the level of access to effective public transport connections, that can sustainably link rural communities to major centres and destinations where employment opportunities, retail, education and community, health and education facilities are available
- how new, or enhanced services and facilities, or new transport infrastructure, may come forward, through the Local Plan or other plans/ strategies, that could improve access to sustainable travel in rural communities.

As well as this, there are other factors that could be taken into account when we investigate potential and appropriate levels of growth in individual villages and settlements. This includes the Council's Small and Rural Schools Strategy, and other issues related to schools in rural areas, as well as the provision of superfast broadband. We discuss these issues in more detail later in this document.



Sustainable travel for access to services and facilities

Greenhouse gas emissions from road transport make up around a fifth of UK greenhouse gas emissions²⁶, and this makes it a significant contributor to the acceleration of climate change. Addressing climate change is a longstanding priority for the Council, further emphasised by its declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019. For this reason, we want to make choices relating to growth that minimise the need for essential journeys, to access key services and facilities to be made by private car. This supports the emerging Local Plan priorities, in particular, those relating to pursuing a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate, and achieving sustainable travel and transport.

As noted in the Issues section of this document there is variation in our rural villages and settlements, in the level of access to key services and facilities by walking and cycling, and access to effective public transport connections. For example, villages and settlements that are closer to urban areas and market towns are more likely to be able to take advantage of the full range of services and facilities available in these locations, provided safe walking and cycling access is available, or suitable public transport connections exist. In contrast, villages and settlements located further away from these service centres often have access to fewer local services and facilities, sometimes with no suitable public transport connections for access to further services and facilities. In these instances, there is usually a greater reliance on travel by private car.

²⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/roadtransportandairremissions/2019-09-16#greenhouse-gas-emissions-from-road-transport-make-up-around-a-fifth-of-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

We already consider opportunities to access services and facilities using sustainable means, like walking, cycling and public transport, through Policy PSP11 of our adopted Local Plan, in the [Policies, Sites and Places \(PSP\) Plan 2017](#). Policy PSP11 sets out the key services and facilities that should be in walking and cycling distance. Where key services and facilities are not accessible by walking and cycling, they should be within an appropriate distance of a bus stop, served by an appropriate level of public transport services²⁷ that connect to destinations that offer the remaining key services and facilities. The table below displays the key services and facilities, and the walking and cycling distances considered to be appropriate in this policy. The routes to these facilities should also be safe for walking and cycling.

Key Services and Facilities	Appropriate walking and cycling distances
Retail (comparison) shops and services and/or market towns and town centres (defined in Core Strategy Policy CS14)	1,200 Metres
(Weekly) superstore or supermarket	1,200 Metres
(Day-to-day) smaller food (convenience) shops	1,200 Metres
Local health services	1,200 Metres
Pharmacy	800 Metres
Dedicated community centres (defined by South Gloucestershire Council)	800 Metres
Post offices	800 Metres
Public houses	800 Metres
Secondary school	3 Miles ²⁸
Primary school	2 Miles
Major employers, designated town centres, and safeguarded employment areas (defined in Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy)	2,000 Metres walking 5,600 Metres cycling

Data & Access Profiles (DAPs) have been produced for each of our villages and settlements. Each profile shows the current level of walking and cycling access to these key services and facilities. It also provides an understanding of the current level of suitable public transport access to major centres and destinations for services and facilities not accessible in the village or settlement.

Please note that the evidence presented in the DAPs represents a point in time. If any of the information included is out of date, we would welcome your feedback, particularly as we are aware that changes as a result of Covid-19 may have had an impact on specific elements of this evidence. More information about this evidence can be found in the DAPs and supporting Data & Access Methodology can be viewed online [here](#).

²⁷ For the purposes of this section, an appropriate level of public transport service is considered to be:

1. Individual or combined services, total journey time under 1 hour.
2. At least 5 services a day during the week, 3 at weekends, to and from the destination.
3. During the week; one service arriving at the destination before 9am, and one leaving after 5pm.

²⁸ The Education Act 1996 set the maximum statutory walking distance as 3 miles for secondary schools 3 miles and 2 miles for primary schools - please see the South Gloucestershire 2018 Sustainable Access Methodology for further explanation (paragraphs 7.6 & 9.9).

Because of the emerging plan priorities discussed above, and our proposed focus on minimising reliance on private car journeys, we think that the Data & Access Profiles provide us with information that will help us to investigate and discuss what might be proportionate and sustainable growth in individual villages and settlements. They provide a snapshot of the current level of access to services and facilities, including those that are not currently available or cannot be accessed by sustainable means.

When considering and investigating the level of growth that might be appropriate in individual villages and settlements, it is important to understand how any growth might support existing services and facilities, or provide new services and facilities, and in doing so help to create more sustainable communities. It is also important to understand and recognise that new transport infrastructure or development may also lead to an enhancement of the level of sustainable access to key services and facilities in specific villages and settlements.

In some of our rural villages and settlements, where there is a lack of walking, cycling and public transport connections and where small or medium-scale growth is unlikely to improve provision of key services and facilities or transport infrastructure, it might not be appropriate, for sustainability reasons, to consider growth through our new Local Plan. In instances where those communities have identified a local need for new homes or jobs, provision exists for these to be considered and brought forward instead through a neighbourhood plan, or a rural exception site.

Sustainability of small and rural schools

Small and rural schools have an important role to play in providing local educational provision in our rural communities, and ensuring that every child and young person can access high-quality, local, school provision.

We are aware of the very specific pressures faced by small and rural schools²⁹ as a result of relatively low numbers of children on roll. This has implications for the structure and organisation of schools, and in some cases can threaten the long-term financial viability of small and rural schools. The Small and Rural Schools Strategy sets out the Council's approach, and commitment, to ensuring their sustainability by developing collaborative models of leadership, and using a joined-up approach to planning and housing delivery, that allows small and rural schools and communities to continue to thrive.

The Council has an obligation to provide free transport to educational facilities where there is no safe or appropriate walking routes, within a minimum distance from a child's home. Although there are a limited number of secondary schools in South Gloucestershire, and some degree of travel is likely to be necessary, there are a significant number of rural primary schools of various sizes in rural villages. Providing free school transport, to homes beyond walking distance of existing and planned education facilities, has created a considerable and long-term financial cost for the Council. Where longer distance travel is needed to access education facilities, it can encourage more private car journeys, and this conflicts with our new Local Plan's emerging priorities regarding sustainable travel and climate change. By making good choices about possible locations for development, and appropriate levels of growth, on the basis of proximity for access by walking, the long-term cost of free school transport to rural schools could be reduced or minimised. This would benefit the Council and rural communities.

29 The Department for Education (DfE) refers to small schools as having fewer than 210 pupils on roll. In the case of rural schools, the DfE has for many years been particularly concerned about schools serving rural communities and under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools [England] Order 2019, designates 16 maintained primary schools as 'rural' in South Gloucestershire.



Access to superfast broadband

In recognition of the important role that access to superfast broadband increasingly plays in meeting people's shopping, employment and social interaction needs, we think this should be considered when we investigate what might be an appropriate level of growth in individual villages and settlements. The importance of access to superfast broadband has been further underlined during the Covid-19 pandemic, where opportunities for non-essential face-to-face interaction have been limited by restrictions on movement to limit the spread of the virus. As part of this, we have seen wide-ranging changes to working practices, including the need for a large proportion of the population to work from home which, for many, requires a reliable internet connection.

Notwithstanding this, the Covid-19 pandemic has also served to underline the importance of our ability to gain physical access, rather than virtual access, to some key services and facilities, including employment for many key and frontline workers, and retail, health and community facilities.

With this in mind, we don't think that access to superfast broadband, alone, replaces the need for physical access to services and facilities, as doing so may result in growth in locations where access to services and facilities can't be achieved by sustainable means like walking, cycling or public transport.

Like the other considerations discussed above, there is significant variation in access to superfast broadband, both between villages and settlements, and also within those villages and settlements. We think an understanding of this could help to inform decisions about what level of growth might be appropriate, and might possibly support the consideration of specific sites, in the next stage of preparing the Local Plan 2020.

Key planning designations and considerations

There are several planning considerations that arise as a result of national planning policy, and we will need to take them into account. These are:

- flood risk and climate change – making choices based on the need to take a sequential, risk-based approach to flood risk when considering where development should be located. At the same time, we want to investigate and gain an understanding of the needs and aspirations of communities located in areas at risk of flooding.
- the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – making choices based on the need to maintain and enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the Cotswolds. Through doing so, we will recognise the role the environment plays in supporting jobs, businesses and a vibrant local rural economy, as well as the wide range of recreational and health and well-being benefits the AONB provides to the communities within the Cotswolds and across the wider area.

- Green Belt – making choices based on the need to maintain the purposes of the Green Belt (as set out in national policy), while recognising that a large number of our rural villages and settlements are located in the Green Belt, understanding that some rural villages in the Green Belt are near key services, facilities and public transport, and may not be covered by other planning designations or issues.
- other national and local planning designations that relate to our environment, heritage and built assets, that will need to be considered in the context of individual villages and settlements.

Flood Risk

The Issues section of this document discusses areas in South Gloucestershire that include areas identified as being within Flood Zone 3 (highest risk) and Flood Zone 2. They are primarily focused in the area adjacent to the Severn Estuary (Section 3 - Issue 11). Climate change is likely to have an impact on flood risk, both, increasing the extent of the area at higher risk, as well as the frequency of flood events. One of our new Local Plan's priorities is to make sure that when delivering sustainable growth, we consider the impacts of a changing climate and plan accordingly to deal with it.



National policy requires us to take a 'sequential approach'³⁰, which means only investigating growth in areas of the highest flood risk if our growth needs can't be accommodated at locations in the area of lowest flood risk (Flood Zone 1). It is also worth noting that national planning policy³¹ is clear that 'sensitive development' that includes the provision of new housing, should be directed away from areas at high risk of flooding, now and in the future.

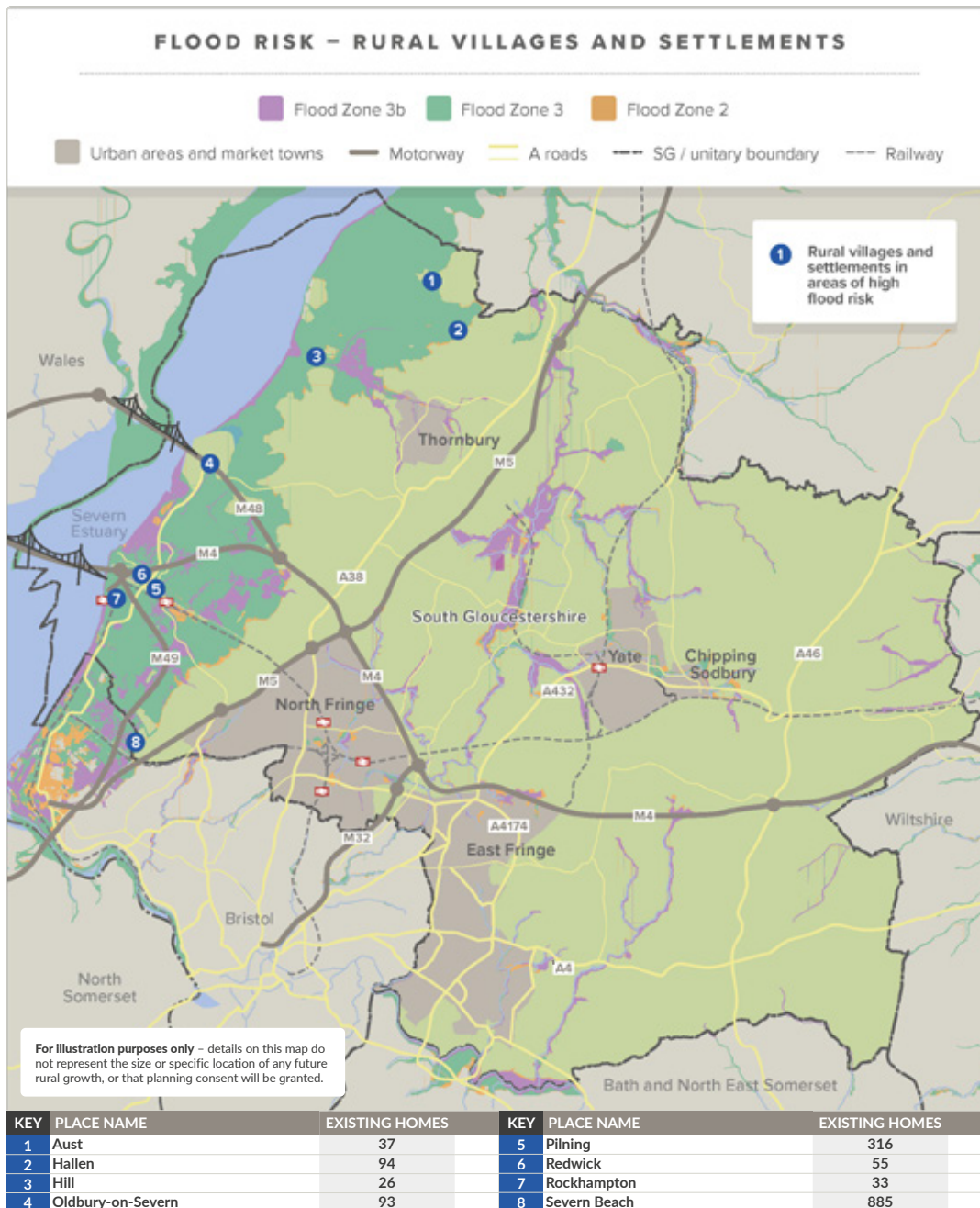
At this stage, because we do not yet know the level of growth we need to plan for, we aren't able to demonstrate that we can meet our needs completely in the areas of South Gloucestershire in Flood Zone 1. We are, therefore, unable to rule out growth in any of the villages and settlements in areas of high flood risk.

There are also a number of rural communities located in areas at the highest level of flood risk, and it's likely that this has affected their ability to attract investment, or achieve renewal, regeneration and growth. While it might not be appropriate to meet South Gloucestershire's general housing needs in these communities, we do want to understand their needs and aspirations. As part of this, we want to investigate whether, by working with partners, or in other ways, we might be able to support their long-term sustainability. We want to understand what infrastructure, or mechanisms and approaches might be needed to make sure any potential development in those communities is safe, and takes full account of flood risk and coastal change, now and in the future.

In some instances communities may want to, or have already begun to, identify their own local need for homes and other development by preparing neighbourhood plans. Locally identified needs should be met at local level, for example within a neighbourhood plan area, and would be required to apply the 'sequential' and 'exception' tests at neighbourhood plan level. An example of this can be seen in Oldbury-on-Severn, where local need for homes was identified by the community in an area surrounded by the highest level of flood risk, following this, they have identified suitable locations to meet their local needs.

³⁰ Government guidance explains more about the [sequential approach](#)

³¹ [National Planning Policy Framework](#) paragraph 157



Work will soon begin on upgrading existing flood defences and in some locations providing new flood defences along the Severn Estuary, as part of the Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA) Ecology Mitigation and Flood Defence Scheme. Details of this scheme, including a short video explaining its purpose, are available to view [here](#).



Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area flood defence project.

It is important to note, that this scheme is designed to maintain the current level of protection and mitigate against increases in flood risk from the impacts of climate change. It does not reduce the level of flood risk in the area and, therefore, the sequential test would still apply. To be clear, the development of commercial and/or employment floorspace, and some infrastructure development, continues to be appropriate, subject to meeting other flood risk requirements. It would be inappropriate to consider housing growth in these areas based solely on the delivery of the ASEA Ecology Mitigation and Floods Defence Scheme. However, we are keen to understand what other solutions or choices there might be, alongside the ASEA Ecology Mitigation and Floods Defence Scheme, to support communities impacted by risk of flooding to prosper and thrive.

Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The eastern side of South Gloucestershire is in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), an area of national significance for landscape quality and beauty. National planning policy recognises the importance of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and places great importance on conserving and enhancing their landscape and scenic beauty.



The Cotswolds AONB is shaped both by its geology and by human activity, including farming, which combine to create a unique, distinctive landscape. The built environment we see today reflects the evolution of farmsteads, hamlets and villages to market towns that developed as centres for trade over centuries. The Cotswolds contains a wealth of heritage assets, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas and historic parks and gardens, and is widely regarded as being the quintessential pre-industrial English landscape.

The natural and cultural environment of the Cotswolds offers opportunities to enhance the physical and mental well-being of both local people and visitors from across South Gloucestershire and beyond, through a range of leisure activities, including walking, running, cycling and quiet relaxation.

The importance of being able to access high-quality countryside like the Cotswolds AONB is well trailed, and has been further highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic. We think it is important for communities to be well-connected by walking and cycling routes to the recreation and wellbeing opportunities offered by the AONB.

The Cotswolds has a varied economy, largely based around farming, forestry, tourism and quarrying, all of which continue to influence and contribute to the landscape. We think that, in future, the Cotswolds AONB may also offer significant opportunities to contribute to addressing some of our environmental and climate change priorities, including the provision of new areas for biodiversity offsetting, tree planting, natural flood alleviation, Green Infrastructure and nature connectivity, as well as potentially suitable areas for renewable energy generation.

The AONB is generally considered to be an affluent area, although there are pockets of social and economic deprivation, often as a result of limited public transport and lack of services in some areas, which can contribute to rural isolation. Added to this, the lack of new housing development can lead to high house prices in the AONB and a lack of Affordable Housing. This can mean that many people who grew up, and/or work, in the AONB, often cannot afford to remain living in the communities they grew up or work in.

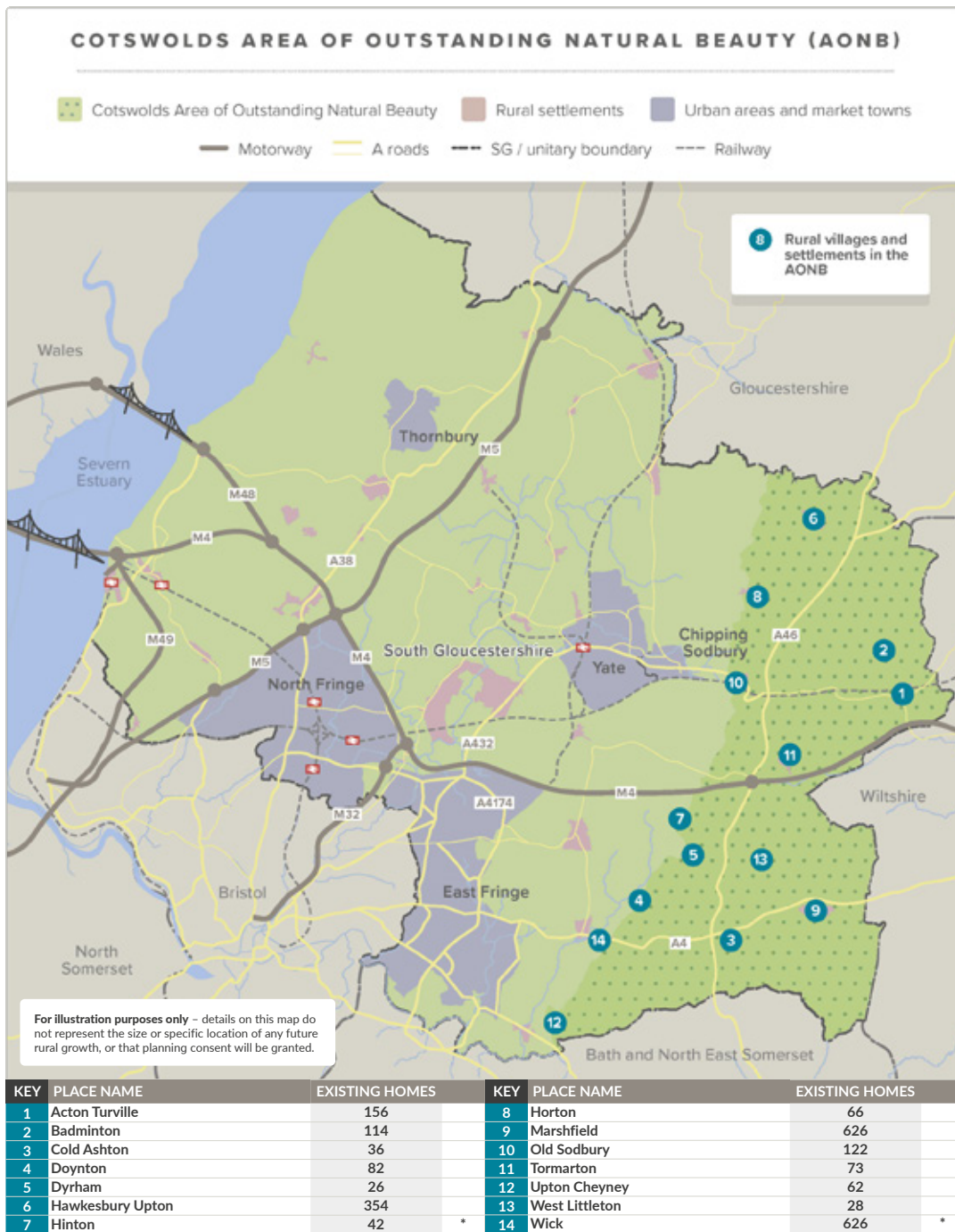


There are also issues in terms of the long-term sustainability of key services and facilities in local communities. The Cotswolds AONB is a living, working landscape and we want to explore possibilities to support the local economy, as well as any opportunities that positively contribute to meeting our objectives on climate change and nature recovery, including the potential to generate renewable energy, and new areas for wildlife, tree planting and green infrastructure corridors. The provision of a mixture of well-designed, mixed tenure and Affordable Housing can help to support existing communities to thrive and prosper.

We think that there is an opportunity for our new Local Plan to state more clearly, a strategy, for the communities and landscapes in the AONB. We think it is important to be clear about the relationship of these communities and spaces to the rest of South Gloucestershire and the vital part they could play in helping the whole of South Gloucestershire achieve its sustainability ambitions.

However, while investigating the potential for growth of homes, employment or other uses in the AONB, careful consideration will need to be given to the AONB and its setting, to avoid harmful effects. Regard will also be given to the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, and the statutory purpose of the AONB designation, to conserve and enhance their natural beauty. We think this would be most effectively done when we consider individual places and proposed sites at village and settlement level.

Because of the issues mentioned above, we think it is appropriate to investigate the potential for the appropriate and sustainable growth of villages and settlements within the Cotswolds AONB.



Green Belt

National planning policy places great importance on Green Belts, which aim to prevent urban sprawl, by keeping land permanently open. As 42% of South Gloucestershire is designated as Green Belt, the approach to planning for growth in villages and settlements both outside of and inside the Green Belt.

National planning policy requires us to demonstrate that we have looked at all reasonable options for meeting South Gloucestershire's development needs before looking at changing the extent of the Green Belt. Our new Local Plan is already investigating ways to maximise the amount of new development that can be accommodated in the existing urban areas and on brownfield sites through the 'Urban Lifestyles' approach. We will need to consider non-Green Belt locations in our rural areas, before we can plan for growth in Green Belt locations. We also need to work with neighbouring authorities who have non-Green Belt land that could potentially be considered for development.

Although, we do not yet know what level of growth we will need to plan for, the Issues section has set out that meeting all growth needs in our existing urban areas will probably be very challenging and could have negative impacts on the quality of life and environment in those areas. We also know that adjoining local authorities also have their own housing needs to meet.

Therefore at this early stage, when we consider which rural communities should be investigated for some level of growth, in the context of the Green Belt, we think there are two broad options to consider:

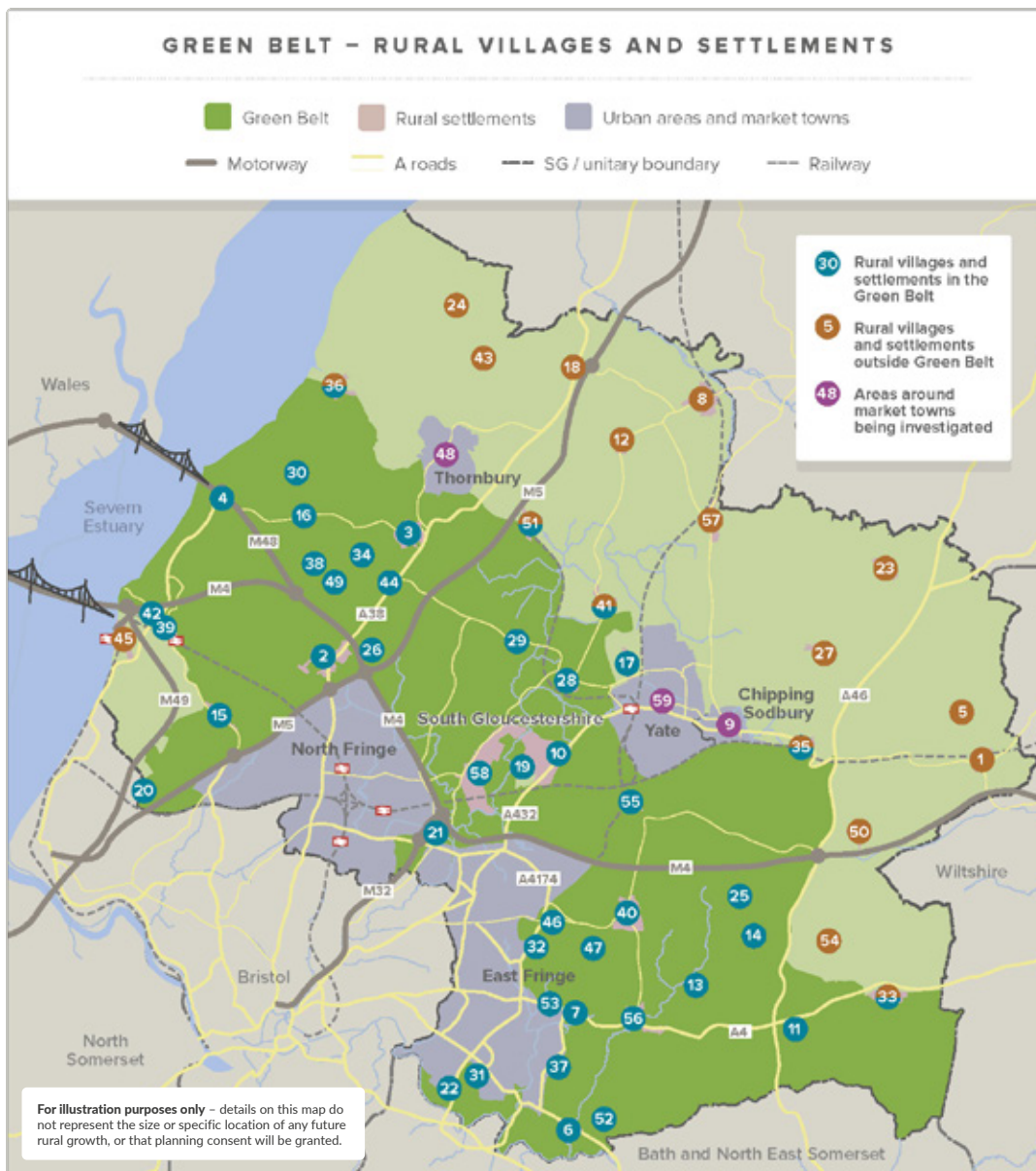
1. [Only investigate the potential for an appropriate level of small to medium-scale growth in villages and settlements outside of the Green Belt](#)

When preparing previous Local Plans, there has, traditionally, been support for protecting the existing area of Green Belt in South Gloucestershire. We also need to consider this option because national planning policy requires us to demonstrate that we have looked at all reasonable options for meeting our development needs before looking at any changes to the extent of the Green Belt.

2. [Investigate the potential for an appropriate level of small to medium-scale growth in villages and settlements both outside and inside the Green Belt](#)

This would result in the largest number of villages and settlements being considered, and providing the broadest range of possible options to deliver the homes needed for communities across South Gloucestershire.

A summary of the pros and cons of each of these options is provided for reference in **Appendix ①**



KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES	KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES
1	Acton Turville	156	31	Longwell Green	*
2	Almondsbury	640	32	Mangotsfield	*
3	Alveston	1055	33	Marshfield	626
4	Aust	37	34	Old Down	81
5	Badminton	114	35	Old Sodbury	122
6	Bitton	318	36	Oldbury-on-Severn	93
7	Bridgegate	25	37	Oldland	*
8	Charfield	1072	38	Olveston	396
9	Chipping Sodbury	2181	39	Pilning	316
10	Coalpit Heath	812	40	Pucklechurch	960
11	Cold Ashton	36	41	Rangeworthy	182
12	Cromhall (Bibstone and Townwell)	141	42	Redwick	55
13	Doynton	82	43	Rockhampton	33
14	Dyrham	26	44	Rudgeway	99
15	Easter Compton	231	45	Severn Beach	885
16	Elberton	39	46	Shortwood	73
17	Engine Common	117	47	Siston	30
18	Falfield	142	48	Thornbury	5768
19	Frampton Cotterell	2621	49	Tockington	140
20	Hallen	94	50	Tormarton	73
21	Hambrook	50	51	Tytherington	181
22	Hanham	*	52	Upton Cheyney	62
23	Hawkesbury Upton	354	53	Warmley	*
24	Hill	26	54	West Littleton	28
25	Hinton	42	55	Westerleigh	182
26	Hortham Village	293	56	Wick	626
27	Horton	66	57	Wickwar	585
28	Iron Acton	197	58	Winterbourne	2547
29	Latteridge	18	59	Yate	13027
30	Littleton upon Severn	42			

* Point outside urban area.

N Land north and around is outside the Green Belt.

S Land to south is outside of the Green Belt.

As part of this, it is also worth noting that a number of our villages and settlements are ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt, and others are ‘inset’ (cut out) in the Green Belt. This is another factor that may influence the approach we propose, in the context of the need to maintain the role and function of the Green Belt in those locations, in the next stage of preparing the Local Plan 2020.

Because of the amount of land in the Green Belt and covered by other key constraints, we think, based on work we’ve undertaken to date, that it is very likely we will need to look at options for growth in and around villages and settlements that are both outside and inside the Green Belt. Because of this, we think it is appropriate to investigate the potential for growth in villages and settlements in the Green Belt.

By investigating the potential for an appropriate level of growth in the largest range of villages and settlements (and therefore, in the future, potential sites) we can be more selective about how much growth and where growth is proposed in our new Local Plan. This will help us meet our emerging new Local Plan priorities; such as ensuring we place growth in locations where it is possible to walk, cycle or use public transport to access services and facilities is possible. This approach can also avoid the potential overloading of villages and settlements outside the Green Belt that would harm our designated environment, heritage assets and unique character of many rural villages.

Other planning considerations and issues

There are other important considerations that we will need to take into account when we consider what might be an appropriate level of growth in our villages and settlements. Some of these have been highlighted in the guiding principles in section 5 of this document. These and others will need to be investigated at site level and include the need to:

- protect and enhance designated ecological assets – including internationally, nationally (including Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs)) and locally-protected sites (including Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNClS))
- protect and enhance landscape and heritage designations and their settings – like key hillsides, valleys, ridgelines, conservation areas and listed buildings
- protect and enhance the function and connectivity of our emerging green infrastructure and nature recovery networks
- consider any potential for below ground-level issues including contamination, for example as a result of previous land uses
- ensure that we protect a ‘sense of place and character’ when planning for new development.

We can begin to think about these considerations in detail, when we begin to look at potential options in villages and settlements at a site level.

Consideration of these issues will be presented at the next stage of the Local Plan, once potential sites for development have been identified (through the Call for Sites) and assessed (through the HELAA and other technical work) and we are in a position to discuss potential options at a village and settlement level. The emerging outputs of this work will be presented in our Phase 2 consultation document, which we hope to publish in Autumn 2021.

Summary

At this stage of preparing the new Local Plan we think that unless there are significant constraints or sustainability issues, all of our rural villages and settlements should be considered, to determine the role they could play in our strategy for the sustainable growth of homes and jobs. We are looking at different considerations and approaches that we might use to determine potential and appropriate levels of growth in individual villages and settlements.

As part of this, we will look at the size of existing communities and recent and approved developments. We will also consider the level of existing and potential sustainable travel to key services and facilities and the potential positive impacts on small rural schools and school transport, as well as the role of digital connections and broadband.

Are there any other key considerations you feel we should consider?

- Do you agree with our proposed approach to the national policy issues highlighted, like flood risk, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt, and other important planning designations?
- Are there any other issues you think we should consider? Please provide as much detail as you can to support your views.

What happens next?

Following this consultation, we will analyse and consider all the responses received, with the aim of understanding of what might be an appropriate level of growth in individual villages/ settlements. The feedback we receive will assist in determining how we approach the next stage of preparing our new Local Plan.

At this stage we are particularly interested in understanding if there are other principles/ issues we should consider to establish what might be an appropriate level of growth in each community, and whether you agree with our approach to Flood Risk, the AONB and Green Belt.

Alongside this, we will also need to consider and assess the sites submitted to us through the Call for Sites 2020, by undertaking a [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment \(HELAA\)](#). This will consider growth at site level within individual rural communities. This will be key for understanding the impact on ecological, heritage, landscape and other key principles. Once this work has been concluded, we will be in a position to start to look at potential options at a site level within individual villages and settlements. The emerging outputs of this work will be presented through our Phase 2 consultation document which is anticipated in Autumn 2021.

It is also worth flagging that the government published a [Planning White Paper](#) for consultation in August 2020 which proposes significant changes to the planning system and national planning policy. The White Paper proposes include reforms to the way local plans are produced and what they should contain, which will impact on how we progress our new Local Plan in future years.

At this moment in time we cannot be certain as to what the exact changes to the planning system and new approaches to Local Plans will be. It is likely to affect the way we present and discuss future options and choices around growth and change. What is certain however, is that through our new Local Plan we will need to make choices around growth, change and protection in and around our rural communities.

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed approach to the national policy issues highlighted, like flood risk, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt, and other planning considerations and issues?

Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to investigate an appropriate level of growth in our rural villages and settlements?

Are there any other planning issues you think we should consider?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.



Planning Policies

Purpose of local plan policies

Local plan policies provide direction and clarity on where development is expected to take place. They outline the number and types of homes, jobs, services and facilities, as well as infrastructure that will be expected to be developed in South Gloucestershire. Planning policies also safeguard and seek to enhance our green infrastructure, biodiversity, historic assets and buildings, and unique areas of character across the authority.

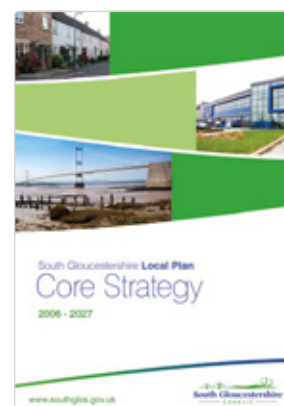
Topic-based policies shape the quality, type and way we build new types of development. Ensuring we aim for high quality and progressive approaches is crucial if we are to positively address our declared Climate Emergency, build upon the lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic, and address inequalities across our communities.

Policies in our Local Plan are the starting point for making decisions on all planning applications and will be the foundation for guiding development across all of South Gloucestershire.

Our existing planning policies

The Local Plan for South Gloucestershire is currently formed by the Core Strategy, the Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) Plan and the Joint Waste Core Strategy. These documents contain a wide range of adopted planning policies, and will be used to determine planning applications until they are replaced.

The Core Strategy, which contains the strategic policies for the area, was adopted in 2013. The policies within the Core Strategy were prepared to support the growth strategy at that time, with updates and more detailed policies set out in the PSP Plan (adopted in 2017).



Cover of adopted Core Strategy.

Local Plan 2020 – Opportunity for new planning policies

Our new Local Plan is an opportunity to review our existing policies and begin thinking about what type of new policies and approaches will be needed in the future.

Since adoption of the Core Strategy and PSP, we have begun to see new evidence, approaches and priorities emerge that will eventually require new planning policies. Key drivers informing consideration of new planning policies and approaches include:

- priorities set out in the Council Plan (adopted 2020);
- declaration of a Climate Emergency on 17 July 2019;
- the Covid-19 pandemic and the impacts this has had on communities, the health services and the economy;
- updates to the National Planning Policy Framework in 2019 – with more expected to come forward in the next few years;
- there have been, and will continue to be, updates to National Planning Policy Guidance which supports the NPPF; and
- preparation of a new West of England Mayoral Plan – The Spatial Development Strategy.

As we begin considering what policies might need to eventually replace the Core Strategy and PSP, we start by discussing the range of issues facing South Gloucestershire. We have also suggested nine priorities to address these issues.

We want to make sure that where our new Local Plan can tackle the issues and address priorities for the area, we have effective policies in order to do so. New policies might evolve from existing policies, or cover entirely new issues and topics.

For example, we know we need to set a new strategy and policies for where new homes, jobs and infrastructure will go, to eventually replace existing policies like CS5 (Location of development), CS12 (Safeguarded areas for economic development), and our approach to town centres and high streets (Policies CS14 and PSP31). We also want to make sure that new development goes further to reducing the amount of carbon required to heat and run new homes by eventually replacing policy CS3 (Renewable and low carbon energy generation) and PSP6 (Onsite renewable and low carbon energy), with new further reaching standards, as we aim for zero carbon development.

We want to promote healthy lifestyles by controlling the number and type of new takeaways near schools by updating our existing approach set out in policy PSP35 (Food and Drink Uses). We need to respond to messages emerging in the wake of Covid-19, for example, ensuring that people have sufficient space to accommodate members of their household and work from home without having to move, whilst protecting residential amenity. This will require new approaches from those set out in PSP38 (Development within existing residential curtilages, including extensions and new dwellings). Achieving these and other priorities will require new policies which update and eventually replace our adopted policies.

Changes to the way the planning system operates (including national planning policy) is likely to have a strong influence on the range and content of planning policies we include in our Local Plan 2020. In August 2020, the Government released a [Planning White Paper](#) for consultation which proposes significant changes to the Planning system. One of the proposals includes reducing the number of policies at the Local Plan level and creating new national planning policies to cover key topics.

Local Plan 2020 Phase ①

– Planning policies

This document is the first we have produced as we begin the process of producing our new Local Plan.

As part of this Phase 1 Issues and Approaches consultation document, we want to set out the range of policies we think will be required and which local plan priority they would assist in achieving. We also want to be clear which of our existing policies may need to evolve and eventually be replaced.

For some topic based policies we already have prepared early drafts of policies to share, covering the following topics:

Working Policy Draft Available (Strategic)	Working Policy Draft Available (Non-Strategic)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation• Creating well-designed places• Nationally Important Infrastructure Projects (NSIPS) and related development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy Management in New Development• Renewable & Low Carbon Energy System• Parking Requirements, including Electric Vehicles• Oldbury - Nuclear New Build• Oldbury A station - Decommissioning• Radioactive Waste

However, at this early stage of building our new Local Plan we do not have drafts of most of the policies that will be needed. The majority of policies cannot be effectively drafted until further consultation, evidence and studies have been carried out. This is particularly true of those policies which set out, or are linked to, the strategy for growth/change of homes, jobs, shops and transport.

Our approaches to strategic growth policies will be informed by the emerging sub-regional Spatial Development Strategy and supporting evidence base. Once greater detail is known, for example the number of new homes or jobs we need to plan for, we can begin drafting those new policies. We have started exploring how we might approach new strategies and policies for growth (set out in section 5: Building a Strategy) but we are very much at the beginning of this process. In addition, changes being proposed by the Planning White Paper may alter how these policies are progressed, as national guidance and legislation is amended.

As part of this Phase 1 document, we want to get your feedback on whether the range of planning policies we are currently proposing are correct, and if you have any views on the draft policies we are presenting at this time.

Local Plan 2020 Phase ②

– Planning policies

Future stages of the Local Plan 2020 will put forward a more comprehensive set of draft policies. We hope to consult you on a fuller range of policies in 2021.

These policies will be informed and refined from the feedback obtained from this Phase 1 consultation; particularly if we have the issues and priorities for the plan correctly identified. Any updates to local priorities, national planning policy and legislation, as well as new information relating to the SDS, will also inform the drafting of more detailed policies.

Due to the proposed changes to the planning system set out in the Governments Planning White Paper, some of the policies we have listed (including our draft policies) might not be carried forward. However, at this stage we think it is important to set out the range of policies we think are needed in our new Local Plan. At the next consultation stage, we will set out if certain topic areas are likely to be addressed at a national rather than local level, and consider whether local level detail is still required.

Local Plan 2020

– Potential policies

141

The following tables set out the types of policies we currently hope to include in our new Local Plan. The tables separates policies into ‘strategic policies’ and ‘non-strategic policies’.

The tables link each policy to one of our emerging plan priorities, for example, exceptional spaces and places. To give an idea of the type of detail which might come forward, we have set out the existing planning policies that currently address the headline topic and priority issue. This information is also useful in understanding how once our Local Plan 2020 is eventually adopted, the existing policies will be replaced with a range of new policies that will set different approaches and requirements.

Where we hope to develop policies covering new topics, this is also indicated. Where existing policies are to be deleted, this is indicated in a separate table.

Where we have emerging draft policies to share at this early stage, we have provided this in this table too.

What are strategic and non-strategic policies?

We are required by the National Planning Policy Framework to split our policies into two types; strategic or non-strategic.

Strategic policies are those necessary to address the overarching priorities for the area, including policies that address cross-boundary issues. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development.

They should make sufficient provision for:

- Overarching climate change, design, green infrastructure and environment approaches;
- Housing, employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- Transport and other Infrastructure; and
- Waste, minerals and national projects like Power Stations.

They also provide a clear starting point for more detailed non-strategic policies that are needed to address a wide range of issues.

Non-strategic policies deal with detailed matters, like locational principles and place specific requirements. For example, a non-strategic policy may be a detailed policy for a specific area like Kingwood, where the “Urban Lifestyles” approach is being considered, or growth in a rural village or market town.

It can also be topic-based policies such as open space standards, parking standards, community facilities or the allocation of local sites. Topic-based policies might also cover detailed issues, like transport management, or how standards in relation to carbon reduction in new developments are required, or specific design principles in relation to extensions.

Range of potential policies

The following tables provide the range of policies which we intend to include in our Local Plan 2020. They also indicate how we are looking to review, and eventually replace our existing range of planning policies.

At this stage, the intention is for all of these policies to be contained within a single Local Plan Document. However, if very detailed approaches are required, or different approaches are required above and beyond what we have provided, we may need to progress some policies with additional supporting documents. This might include area-based masterplans, supplementary planning documents, or a further Local Plan policies document- similar to the approach taken with the existing Core Strategy and the PSP.

We would like your feedback on whether we have provided the correct range of policies that we will need in the future to guide development and create exceptional places and spaces within existing and new communities.

Please note: at this stage, the existing policies set out in the Core Strategy, Policies Sites and Places Plan and Joint Waste Core Strategy will remain in place, and will be used to determine planning applications. They will eventually be replaced by new policies included in the Local Plan 2020- but not until the Local Plan 2020 has been “adopted”. This is currently scheduled to take place in late 2023.

Local Plan 2020

– Proposed Strategic Policies

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate	New Policy Topic	Yes Please see Appendix 2
Green Infrastructure	Protect and enhance our environment & Development that promotes health and well-being	CS2 Green infrastructure	No.
Environment and Heritage	Protect and enhance our environment & Creating exceptional places and spaces	CS9 Managing the environment and heritage	No.
Creating well-designed places	Creating exceptional places and spaces	CS1 High quality design PSP1 Local Distinctiveness	Yes Please see Appendix 2
Strategy for Growth & Protection	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS5 Location of development (inc.Green Belt)	No.
New Homes for the Plan Period	Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS15 Distribution of housing	No.
Meeting the needs of our Gypsy/ Traveller & Travelling Showpeople communities	Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS21 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation CS22 Travelling showpeople	No.
Providing land for Economic Development	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS11 Distribution of economic development land	No.
Town Centres, High Streets, Shopping and Leisure.	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS14 Town centres and retail PSP31 Town Centre Uses	No.

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Mineral Extraction, Working and Restoration	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS10 Minerals PSP23 Mineral Working and Restoration PSP24 Mineral Safeguarding Areas	No.
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and related development	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS36 Proposals for major infrastructure projects	Yes Please see Appendix 2
Strategic travel and transport Schemes	Achieving sustainable travel and transport	CS7 Strategic transport infrastructure PSP13 Safeguarding Strategic Transport Schemes and Infrastructure PSP14 Safeguarding Rail Schemes and Infrastructure PSP15 Park and Ride/ Share	No.
Infrastructure & Contributions	Providing the right supporting infrastructure	CS6 Infrastructure and developer contributions	No.

Proposed Non-Strategic Policies

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Energy Management in New Development	Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate	New Policy Topic	Yes. Please see Appendix 2
Renewable and Low Carbon Energy System	Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate	CS3 Renewable and low carbon energy generation CS4 Renewable or low carbon district heat networks	Yes. Please see Appendix 2
Sustainable Design and Construction	Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate	New Policy Topic	No.
Protecting our Landscapes	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP2 Landscape	No.
Trees protection and provision	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP3 Trees and Woodland	No.
Designated Biodiversity Sites & Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP18 Statutory Wildlife Sites: European Sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) PSP19 Wider Biodiversity	No.
Flood risk, drainage, water quality and water management	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP20 Flood Risk, Surface Water and Watercourse Management	No.
Pollution and mitigation	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP21 Environmental Pollution and Impacts	No.
Unstable Land	Protect and enhance our environment	PSP22 Unstable Land	No.
GI, Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Protect and enhance our environment & Development that promotes health and well- being	CS24 Green Infrastructure, sport and recreation standards PSP44 Open Space, Sport and Recreation	No.

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Protecting our Designated Local Green Spaces	Protect and enhance our environment & Development that promotes health and well-being	PSP4 Designated Local Green Spaces	No.
Open Spaces within Urban Areas and Settlements	Protect and enhance our environment & Development that promotes health and well-being	PSP5 Undesignated Open Spaces within Urban Areas and Settlements	No.
Health Impact Assessments	Development that promotes health and well-being	PSP9 Health Impact Assessments	No.
Food and Drink Uses: Locational Constraints (including schools)	Development that promotes health and well-being & Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP35 Food and Drink Uses (including drive through takeaway facilities)	No.
Managing the Historic Environment	Creating exceptional places and spaces & Protect and enhance our environment	PSP17 Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment	No.
Inclusive Design	Creating exceptional places and spaces & Development that promotes health and well-being	PSP37 Internal Space and Accessibility Standards for Affordable Dwellings	No.
Protecting Residential Amenity	Creating exceptional places and spaces	PSP8 Residential Amenity	No.
Development within Existing Residential Curtilages, including Extensions and New Dwellings	Creating exceptional places and spaces	PSP38 Development within Existing Residential Curtilages, including Extensions and New Dwellings	No.
Private Amenity Space Standards	Creating exceptional places and spaces & Development that promotes health and well-being	PSP43 Private Amenity Space Standards	No.

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Development in the Green Belt	Planning for urban and rural areas & Protect and enhance our environment	PSP7 Development in the Green Belt	No.
Efficient Use Of Land	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS16 Housing density	No.
General Urban Living Policy	Planning for urban and rural areas & Creating exceptional places and spaces	New Policy Topic	No.
Locational Constraints: Residential Development in the Countryside	Planning for urban and rural areas & Provide the right type and number of new homes	PSP40 Residential Development in the Countryside	No.
Rural Areas: Housing Exception Sites	Planning for urban and rural areas & Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS19 Rural housing exception sites	No.
Rural Workers Dwellings	Planning for urban and rural areas & Provide the right type and number of new homes	PSP41 Rural Workers Dwellings	No.
Supporting the Rural Economy	Planning for urban and rural areas & Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP28 Rural Economy	No.
Agricultural Development	Planning for urban and rural areas & Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP29 Agricultural Development	No.
Equestrian Development	Planning for urban and rural areas & Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP30 Horse Related Development	No.
Creating Housing Diversity	Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS17 Housing diversity	No.
Planning for Affordable Housing	Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS18 Affordable housing	No.
Planning for Extra Care Housing	Provide the right type and number of new homes	CS20 Extra care housing	No.

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding	Provide the right type and number of new homes	PSP42 Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding	No.
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), Residential Conversions and Sub- Divisions	Provide the right type and number of new homes	PSP39 Residential Conversions, Sub Divisions and Houses in Multiple Occupation	No.
Employment Land: Locational Criteria	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS12 Safeguarded areas for economic development CS13 Non-safeguarded economic development sites PSP26 Enterprise Areas	No.
B8 Uses and Distribution: Locational Criteria	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP27 B8 Storage and Distribution Uses	No.
High streets, town and district centres, and local parades – Uses and criteria	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP32 Local Centres, Parades and Facilities PSP33 Shopping Frontages	No.
Digital Connectivity & Broadband	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	New Policy Topic	No.
Protecting public houses	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP34 Public Houses	No.
Oldbury - Nuclear New Build	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	CS37 Nuclear related development PSP46 Oldbury New Nuclear Build (NNB)	Yes. Please see Appendix 2
Oldbury A station - Decommissioning	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	New Policy Topic	Yes. Please see Appendix 2
Radioactive Waste	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	New Policy Topic	Yes. Please see Appendix 2

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Hydrocarbon Extraction (inc. Fracking)	Enable a productive, clean and inclusive economy	PSP25 Hydrocarbon Extraction (inc. Fracking)	No.
Sustainable Travel & Access	Achieving sustainable travel and transport & Pursue a carbon neutral and resilient future in a changing climate	CS8 Improving accessibility PSP11 Transport Impact Management	No.
Walking & Cycling Networks	Achieving sustainable travel and transport	PSP10 Active Travel Routes	No.
Transport Management	Achieving sustainable travel and transport	PSP11 Transport Impact Management	No.
Parking Requirements, including Electric Vehicles	Achieving sustainable travel and transport	PSP16 Parking Standards	Yes
Motorway Service Facilities	Achieving sustainable travel and transport	PSP12 Motorway Service Areas and Roadside Facilities	No.
Community and cultural facilities	Providing the right supporting infrastructure	CS23 Community infrastructure and cultural activity	No.
Infrastructure for telecommunications	Providing the right supporting infrastructure	PSP36 Telecommunications Infrastructure	No.
Crematoria	Providing the right supporting infrastructure	PSP45 Crematoria	No.

Proposed Area Specific Policies

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Area Specific: Planning for the North Fringe of the Bristol Urban Area	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS25 Communities of the North Fringe of Bristol Urban Area CS26 Cribbs / Patchway new neighbourhood CS27 East of Harry Stoke new neighbourhood	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Urban Lifestyles section for potential approaches which may involve places in the North Fringe
Area Specific: Planning for the East Fringe of Bristol Urban Area	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS29 Communities of the East Fringe of Bristol Urban Area	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Urban Lifestyles section for potential approaches which may involve places in the East Fringe
Area Specific: Planning for Yate and Chipping Sodbury	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS30 Yate and Chipping Sodbury CS31 North Yate new neighbourhood	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Urban Lifestyles & Creating Sustainable Villages sections for potential approaches which may involve Yate and Chipping Sodbury
Area Specific: Thornbury	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS32 Thornbury CS33 Housing opportunity	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Urban Lifestyles & Creating Sustainable Villages sections for potential approaches which may involve Thornbury

Local Plan 2020: Working policy title	Emerging Local Plan Priority/priorities	Existing Adopted Policies	Draft of working policy available? (if no, draft policy will be released in Phase 2 consultation)
Area Specific: Rural Communities, Villages and Settlements	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS34 Rural Areas	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Creating Sustainable Villages sections for potential approaches which may involve rural communities
Area Specific: Sevenside	Planning for urban and rural areas	CS35 Sevenside	No – But please see the Building a Strategy, Creating Sustainable Villages sections for potential approaches which may involve Sevenside
Site Allocations – Sites & Criteria	Planning for urban and rural areas	PSP47 Site Allocations and Safeguarding	No – This stage of the plan does not contain individual sites. This will come forward in later stages of the plan.

Deleted Policies

Existing Adopted Policies	Reason for deletion
CS4a Presumption in favour of sustainable development	Superseded by NPPF

Questions

Do you agree with the range and scope of policies we are proposing to include in our new Local Plan?

Do you have any comments on the range and scope of policies we are proposing?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Appendix ①

Summary of Green Belt options

National Planning Policy attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. National Planning Policy requires all Local Plans to demonstrate that brownfield, urban and non-Green Belt land has been explored prior to proposing changes to the Green Belt.

With this in mind, there are two separate options we need to consider: investigating the potential for growth in those villages and settlements outside of the Green Belt; and, investigating the potential for growth in those villages and settlements both outside of and in the Green Belt. Doing so will help us to identify at this early stage, and at a high level, what the pros and cons might be of either approach.

In order to do this, we have categorised our rural villages and settlements into places which are either outside (including areas partially outside) the Green Belt, or inside/ surrounded by Green Belt, to help us understand the two high level options:

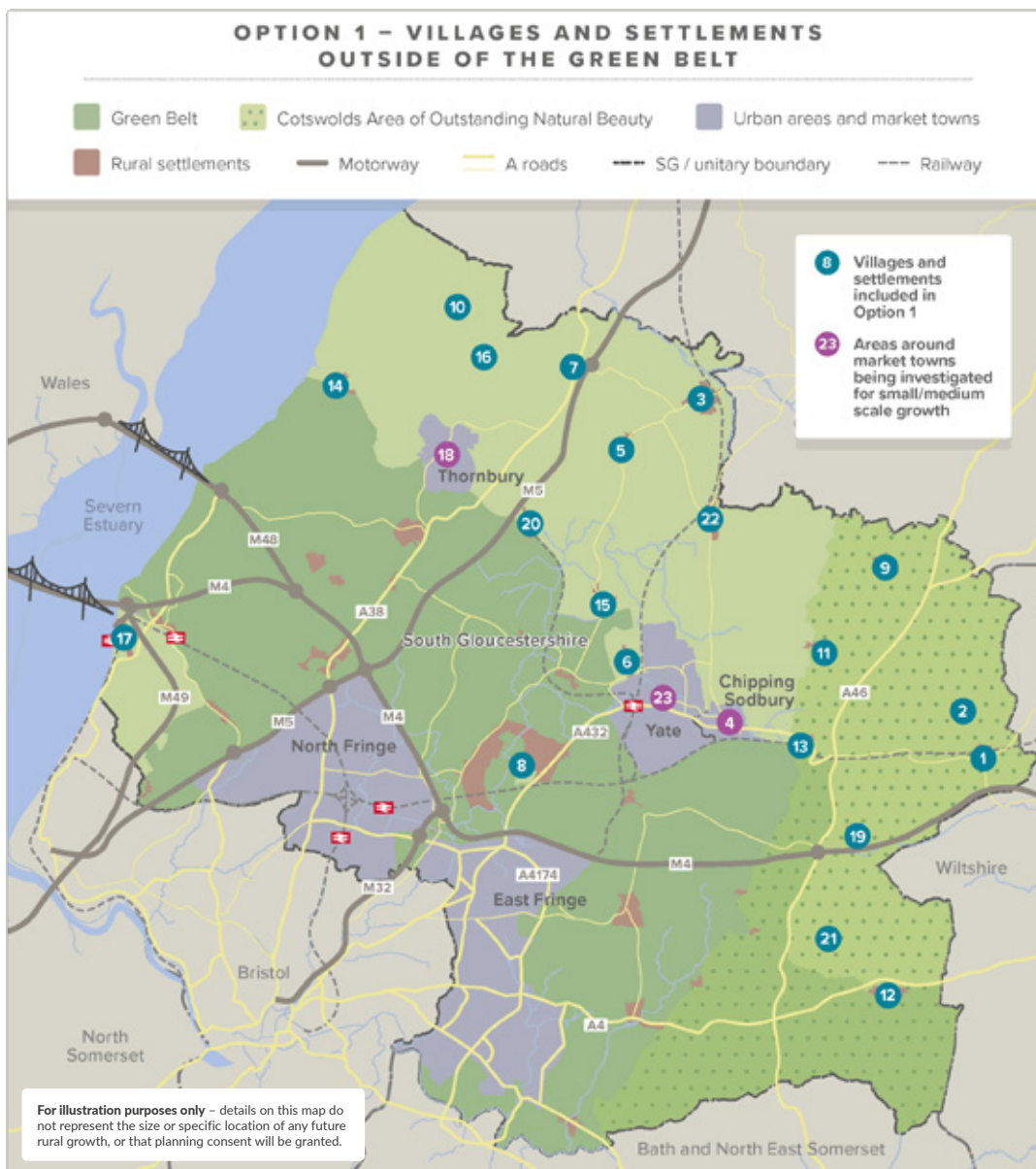
1. Investigate the potential for small to medium-scale growth in villages and settlements outside of the Green Belt; or
2. Investigate the potential for small to medium-scale growth in villages and settlements both outside the Green Belt and in the Green Belt.

Please note that some villages/ settlements are included within both options, as part of them are within/ surrounded by the Green Belt and other parts are outside of the Green Belt. Examples of this include places such as Marshfield, Tytherington, Thornbury and Yate:

This appendix sets out our consideration of the potential positive and negative implications of these two options.

Option ① Outside the Green Belt

Under this option the distribution of small and medium scale growth would be delivered on sites within and surrounding rural villages and settlements that are outside of the Green Belt.



For illustration purposes only – details on this map do not represent the size or specific location of any future rural growth, or that planning consent will be granted.

KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES	KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES
1	Acton Turville	156	13	Old Sodbury	122
2	Badminton	114	14	Oldbury-on-Severn	93
3	Charfield	1072	15	Rangeworthy	182
4	Chipping Sodbury	2181	16	Rockhampton	33
5	Cromhall (Bibstone & Townwell)	141	17	Severn Beach	885
6	Engine Common	117	18	Thornbury	5768
7	Falfield	142	19	Tormarton	73
8	Frampton Cotterell	2621	20	Tytherington	181
9	Hawkesbury Upton	342	21	West Littleton	28
10	Hill	26	22	Wickwar	585
11	Horton	66	23	Yate	12836
12	Marshfield	626			

* Point outside urban area.
 N Land north and around is outside the Green Belt.
 S Land to south is outside of the Green Belt.

😊 POSITIVE

This option would safeguard the existing extent of the Green Belt in South Gloucestershire.

Certain settlements in this option, including Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Coalpit Heath, Thornbury, Wickwar and Yate have walking and cycling access to a range of services and facilities and, or public transport connections (mostly below 30 minute journeys) to places containing facilities not within walking and cycling distance. On face value, development in these locations could reduce dependency on car journeys, as well as helping to avoid isolated rural dwellings, to create better connected and sustainable rural communities. However, the level of walking and cycling to key services and facilities, and public transport access varies across these settlements, with Yate for example, having far greater levels of sustainable access than Charfield and Wickwar. Further investigation of each of these villages/ settlements will be needed to inform any consideration of what might constitute an appropriate level of growth, and to avoid creating unsustainable patterns of development.

😐 NEUTRAL

Some of the villages and settlements in this option, such as Engine Common, Falfield, Hawkesbury Upton, Marshfield, Rangeworthy, Severn Beach and Tytherington have walking and cycling access to a limited number of services and facilities. Higher levels of development in these locations would be likely to be dependent on public transport, with most of the current services presenting a journey time of under 30 minutes, but with variations in journey length and number of destinations that can be connected to, which will need to be explored further. Reliance on rural public transport is considered to have a less positive impact on reducing car dependency than development in locations which also have walking and cycling access to a wider range of key services and facilities.

😞 NEGATIVE/UNCERTAIN

Some of the villages and settlements listed under this option have a low level of walking and cycling access to services and facilities, such as Horton and Old Sodbury. Cromhall also has a relatively low number of services accessible by walking and cycling, and longer public transport journeys of 30 and 45 minutes plus, with connections to a smaller range of destinations. In addition to this, there are some settlements under this option that do not currently have an appropriate minimum level of sustainable public transport links and very limited cycling and walking access to key services and facilities, which includes the following locations; Acton Turville, Badminton, Hill, Rockhampton, Tormarton and West Littleton.

The level of development considered for small and medium scale growth is unlikely to be of a scale sufficient to support major new public transport schemes or provision of new services and facilities (as opposed to supporting/ improving the viability of existing provision. Therefore, it is likely that development at some of these locations may be reliant on private car use to make the majority of journeys.

Further to this, several locations in this option are also in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including; Acton Turville, Badminton, Hawkesbury Upton, Horton, Marshfield, Old Sodbury and Tormarton. If development at these locations was minimised or avoided all together, there would be potential for increased pressure on the rest of the district including a smaller number of locations, where there are a range of other considerations to take into account, as set out below.

Finally, there are a number of different considerations to be taken into account at village/ settlement and site level to understand the potential effects of only proposing small to medium scale rural growth outside the Green Belt. This includes but is not limited to:

- Areas of high flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3) at the following settlements: Acton Turville, Badminton, Coalpit Heath, Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Engine Common, Falfield, Hill, Rockhampton, Severn Beach, Thornbury, Wickwar and Yate.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) located either within or immediately adjacent to: Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Severn Beach, Wickwar and Yate.
- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCl) located either within or immediately adjacent to the majority of settlements included within this option, excluding: Cromhall, Falfield, Hill, Rockhampton and West Littleton and Wickwar.
- Conservation Areas, including: Acton Turville, Badminton, Chipping Sodbury, Hawkesbury Upton, Marshfield, Thornbury, Tormarton, Tytherington, West Littleton, Wickwar and Yate.
- Local Green Spaces (designated and nominated) within: Acton Turville, Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Engine Common, Hawkesbury Upton, Marshfield, Thornbury, Rangeworthy, Rockhampton, Severn Beach, Tormarton, Tytherington, West Littleton, Wickwar and Yate.
- Scheduled ancient monuments (SAM) located within or immediately adjacent to Horton, Thornbury and Tytherington.
- Listed buildings are within each of the villages and settlements included in, apart from Engine Common and Severn Beach.

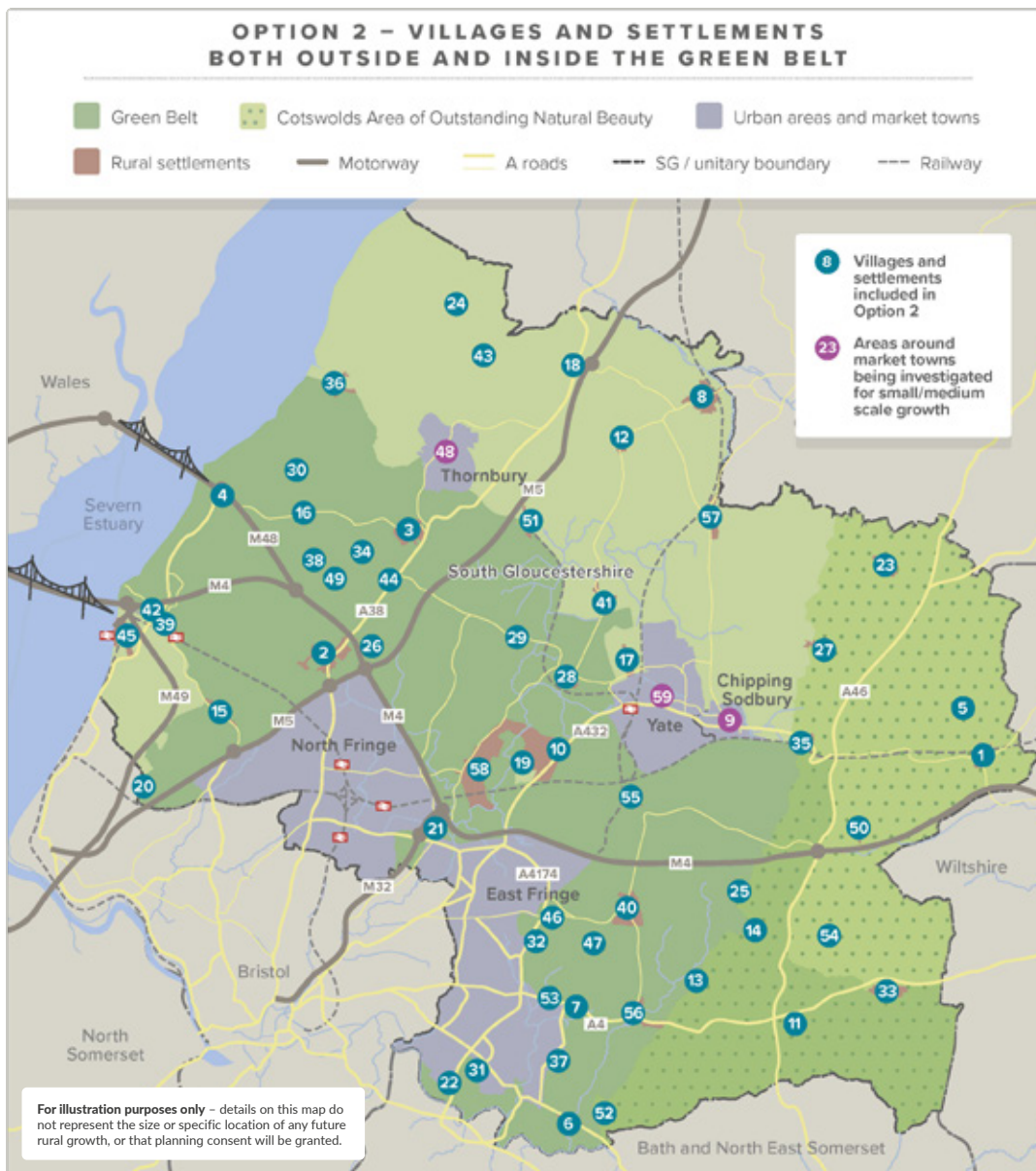
Taking these considerations together, as this option has a relatively small number of locations, the potential for harm or conflict with a wide range of important environmental, historic and natural environment considerations is considered to be high.

Option ②

Both inside and outside the greenbelt

* Urban Edge Location (UEL): These are situated outside the settlement boundary and therefore no data is available.

Under this option, the distribution of small and medium scale growth would be delivered on sites that lie within or surround rural settlements that are either within or outside of the Green Belt.



KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES	KEY	PLACE NAME	EXISTING HOMES
1	Acton Turville	156	31	Longwell Green	*
2	Almondsbury	640	32	Mangotsfield	*
3	Alveston	1055	33	Marshfield	626
4	Aust	37	34	Old Down	81
5	Badminton	114	35	Old Sodbury	122
6	Bitton	318	36	Oldbury-on-Severn	93
7	Bridgegate	25	37	Oldland	*
8	Charfield	1072	38	Olveston	396
9	Chipping Sodbury	2181	39	Pilning	316
10	Coalpit Heath	812	40	Pucklechurch	960
11	Cold Ashton	36	41	Rangeworthy	182
12	Cromhall (Bibstone and Townwell)	141	42	Redwick	55
13	Doynton	82	43	Rockhampton	33
14	Dyrham	26	44	Rudgeway	99
15	Easter Compton	231	45	Severn Beach	885
16	Elberton	39	46	Shortwood	73
17	Engine Common	117	47	Siston	30
18	Falfield	142	48	Thornbury	5768
19	Frampton Cotterell	2621	49	Tockington	140
20	Hallen	94	50	Tormarton	73
21	Hambrook	50	51	Tytherington	181
22	Hanham	*	52	Upton Cheyney	62
23	Hawkesbury Upton	354	53	Warmley	*
24	Hill	26	54	West Littleton	28
25	Hinton	42	55	Westerleigh	182
26	Hortham Village	293	56	Wick	626
27	Horton	66	57	Wickwar	585
28	Iron Acton	197	58	Winterbourne	2547
29	Latteridge	18	59	Yate	13027
30	Littleton upon Severn	42			

* Point outside urban area.
 N Land north and around is outside the Green Belt.
 S Land to south is outside of the Green Belt.

 **POSITIVE**

This option provides the highest number of potential villages/ settlements to deliver small and medium scale growth, creating the best opportunity to: provide a greater range of smaller sites across the district, ensure an appropriate, proportionate increase in existing settlement size, and avoid harm to any sensitive assets and local character.

In addition, this option also includes a higher number of villages and settlements with walking and cycling access to key services and facilities, some of them would still require public transport to avoid reliance on private car journeys. The public transport journey times, particularly in locations around Market Towns and the edge of the urban area are often relatively quick and connect to a wider range of destinations. These include: Almondsbury, Alveston, Chipping Sodbury, Coalpit Heath, Frampton Cotterell, Hambrook, Hanham UEL, Longwell Green UEL, Mangotsfield UEL, Oldland Common UEL, Pucklechurch, Shortwood, Thornbury, Warmley UEL, Winterbourne and Yate.

This option also includes the largest number of places outside of the AONB. While avoiding harm to the AONB would need to be investigated at village/ settlement and site level, investigating growth at a greater number of places will help to avoid pressure on AONB settlements outside of the Green Belt.

 **NEUTRAL**

Some of the villages and settlements included under this option, such as Bitton, Easter Compton, Falfield, Hawkesbury Upton, Hortham, Iron Acton, Marshfield, Rangeworthy, Redwick, Rudgeway, Severn Beach, Siston, Tytherington and Wick have walking and cycling access to a relatively limited number of services and facilities. Development in these locations would likely be dependent on rural public transport links and, although these mostly have a journey time under 30 minutes, some require a journey time over 30 and 40 minutes. Furthermore, some of these locations only have public transport connections to one larger destination. This is considered to have a less positive impact on reducing car dependency than places which also have walking and cycling access and faster public transport journeys with connections to a wider range of places.

 **NEGATIVE/UNCERTAIN**

This option would require the release of some areas of Green Belt in South Gloucestershire, particularly around the urban edge.

A number of the villages and settlements listed under this option have lower levels of walking and cycling access to services and facilities as well as longer public transport journey times and/or reduced numbers of destinations which can be reached. This is the case for Bridgegate, Cold Ashton, Cromhall, Engine Common, Horton, Old Down, Old Sodbury, Olveston, Tockington and Westerleigh.

In addition to this, there are some villages and settlements under this option that currently have no appropriate minimum level of sustainable public transport links and very limited walking and cycling access to key services and facilities. Examples of this include: Acton Turville, Aust, Badminton, Doynton, Dyrham, Elberton, Hallen, Hill, Hinton, Latteridge, Littleton-Upon-Severn, Oldbury-On-Severn, Rockhampton, Tormarton, Upton Cheyney and West Littleton.

The level of development considered for small and medium scale growth is unlikely to be of scale sufficient to support major new public transport schemes or provision of new services and facilities (as opposed to supporting/ improving the viability of existing provision).

Therefore, it is likely that development at some of the locations may be reliant on the private car to make the majority of journeys.

Additionally, the same issues highlighted for places in Option 1 will need consideration at site level to fully understand the potential impacts. However, in comparison to Option 1, Option 2 is considered to offer the greatest potential number of alternative villages and settlements to investigate for an appropriate level of growth. These considerations include but are not limited to:

- Areas of high flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3) at the following settlements: Acton Turville, Aust, Bitton, Badminton, Bridgegate, Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Doynton, Coalpit Heath, Easter Compton, Falfield, Engine Common, Frampton Cotterell, Hallen, Hambrook, Hill, Iron Acton, Littleton-Upon-Severn, Oldbury-On-Severn, Olveston, Pilning, Redwick, Rockhampton, Severn Beach, Thornbury, Warmley UEL, Wick, Wickwar, Winterbourne and Yate.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are located either within or immediately adjacent to: Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Cold Ashton, Hanham UEL, Redwick, Severn beach, Winterbourne and Yate.
- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNICs) are located either within or immediately adjacent to the majority of settlements outlined in this approach, excluding: Almondsbury, Cromhall, Doynton, Elberton, Falfield, Hill, Hinton, Hortham, Iron Acton, Latteridge, Littleton-Upon-Severn, Olveston, Pucklechurch, Rockhampton, Rudgeway, Tockington, Upton Cheyney, Westerleigh and West Littleton.
- Conservation Areas, including: Acton Turville, Almondsbury, Badminton, Bitton, Chipping Sodbury, Cold Ashton, Doynton, Dyrham, Hambrook, Hanham UEL, Hawkesbury Upton, Iron Acton, Marshfield, Olveston, Pucklechurch, Siston, Thornbury, Tockington, Tormarton, Tytherington, Upton Cheyney, West Littleton, Wickwar, Winterbourne and Yate.
- Local Green Spaces (designated and nominated) within: Acton Turville, Alveston, Bridgegate, Charfield, Chipping Sodbury, Coalpit Heath, Engine Common, Hanham UEL, Hawkesbury Upton, Hinton, Iron Acton, Longwell Green UEL, Marshfield, Old Down, Oldland Common UEL, Olveston, Pilning, Pucklechurch, Rangeworthy, Rockhampton, Severn Beach, Shortwood, Thornbury, Tormarton, Tytherington, Westerleigh, West Littleton, Wick, Wickwar, Winterbourne and Yate.
- Scheduled ancient monuments (SAM) located within or immediately adjacent to Alveston, Bitton, Horton, Iron Acton, Oldbury-On-Severn, Olveston, Pucklechurch, Thornbury and Tytherington.
- Listed buildings are found within the majority of villages/ settlements included in this option

160

Appendix ②

Working Draft Policies

Working Policy Title:

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

New Policy Topic

PURPOSE:

Climate change is happening now and is the biggest challenge facing our society. Action must be taken in all sectors of society and at all levels - locally, nationally and globally – to mitigate, and adapt to, the impacts of climate change. We have local and national targets for reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy generation that must be met. These targets are necessary to help slow down the warming of the Earth and reduce the severity of the impacts of climate change.

The Council declared a Climate Emergency on 17th July 2019, which included a pledge to provide the leadership to enable South Gloucestershire to become carbon neutral by 2030, and also to enable our communities to achieve 100% clean energy across all sectors. The Climate Emergency declaration has given fresh impetus to tackling climate change in South Gloucestershire, and the local plan provides a crucial opportunity to make significant progress.

The key risks of climate change have been identified as coming from flooding, coastal change, high temperatures and new pests and diseases. These risks are likely to affect communities, businesses and infrastructure; health, well-being and productivity; water supply (for the public, agriculture, energy generation and industry), food production, and natural capital (which includes ecosystems, soils and biodiversity).

However, there are also wider social, environmental and economic benefits from tackling climate change, for example, in terms of addressing the ecological crisis and public health concerns. South Gloucestershire is well placed to take advantage of these opportunities, and is working with the other West of England authorities to achieve resilient, healthy, communities, an enriched environment, and a successful low carbon economy.

Through the South Gloucestershire Local Plan, we can guide and set requirements for new development to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation is addressed wherever possible. To do this, we have set out an overarching policy on climate change, which aims to ensure that climate change is considered at the beginning of the decision making process when the concept of a new development, including its location and design, is considered.

This policy is a key principle behind the emerging development strategy of the local plan, and it is also reinforced and supported throughout the plan by more detailed policies which cover specific issues such as design, energy management, green infrastructure, sustainable transport and renewable energy.

POLICY WORDING:

Development proposals are required to demonstrate how they will mitigate and adapt to climate change and help deliver radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and generate renewable and/or low carbon energy proportionate to their scale and type. All development proposals must:

- 1. Contribute to achieving the target of South Gloucestershire becoming carbon neutral by 2030 (or the latest updated target set out in the climate change strategy) and the UK statutory target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (set out in the Climate Change Act 2008, as amended); and**
- 2. Maximise the generation of energy from renewable and/or low carbon sources; and**
- 3. Integrate building-level and site-level measures into the design of the development to adapt to climate change impacts that are likely to occur over the lifetime of the development. Measures that lead to increases in energy use and carbon dioxide emissions should be avoided.**

Information proportionate to the scale of the development proposed must be submitted with any planning application to demonstrate how the proposal addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Mitigation

Mitigation primarily means minimising greenhouse gas emissions from the development. Emissions come from the transportation and materials used in the construction process, as well as the emissions from the operation and use of the development throughout its expected lifetime, including the emissions from the travel movements of users.

Evidence of climate change mitigation should be submitted to demonstrate how development proposals:

- a. Are to be built with materials, and construction methods, that have a low carbon footprint; and
- b. Are located in areas where the need to travel is minimised, the use of the private car is minimised irrespective of fuel source, and opportunities for using sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport, are optimised (in line with the approach in existing policies CS8 and PSP11); and
- c. Minimise energy consumption through efficiency measures at building and site level; and
- d. Use renewable and/or low carbon sources of heating systems; and
- e. Maximise passive cooling measures, and meet residual cooling demand sustainably; and
- f. Optimise renewable and/or low carbon energy generation; and
- g. Incorporate infrastructure and technology to facilitate low carbon living and working.

Proposals that address the greenhouse gas emissions arising from the development itself and also contribute to mitigating wider greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. the development is 'carbon negative') are encouraged and appropriate weight will be given to this. Proposals for development where the primary function utilises, promotes or perpetuates reliance on fossil fuels, are considered to be in conflict with the policy and will not be acceptable.

Adaptation

It is essential that adaptation measures are considered at the outset of the decision making process, including the location and initial concept of the development, and also that current and anticipated impacts are taken into account. Often, adaptation measures do not just mitigate potential harm, but also offer beneficial opportunities - a single measure can satisfy several policy requirements.

As a minimum, evidence should be submitted to demonstrate how development proposals:

- a. Are located away from areas vulnerable to increased flooding taking account of the latest available climate projections; and
- b. Incorporate measures to adapt to potential flood risk at building and site level, and minimise flood risk to the wider area; and
- c. Incorporate measures to mitigate high temperatures expected from future climate at building and site level; and
- d. Incorporate opportunities for supporting local food production; and
- e. Incorporate measures to optimise green infrastructure and enhance biodiversity; and
- f. Incorporate measures to reduce stress on water resources, and improve water efficiency; and
- g. Incorporate measures to improve public health and well-being.

General

By incorporating comprehensive mitigation and adaptation measures, it is possible for new development to contribute to meeting the targets referred to in the policy on climate change. Satisfying the detailed requirements set out in policies, such as 'Energy Management in New Development' and 'Creating well-designed places', will also help demonstrate compliance with the overarching climate change policy.

A Technical Guidance document will be prepared to accompany the local plan to set out how the policy requirements of the Climate Change Policy can be achieved. The Guidance will also provide detail on the information required for compliance with the 'Energy Management in New Development' policy and the related clauses of the 'Creating well-designed places' policy. Saved Policy CS4 'Renewable or Low Carbon District Heat Networks' will be addressed too. This will help applicants understand how the policy requirements fit together and what information is necessary to demonstrate how the policies will be satisfied.

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed policy approach?

Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Working Policy Title:

Energy Management in New Development

Existing Policies

Policies Sites and Places policy PSP6 – Onsite renewable and low carbon energy

PURPOSE:

The built environment is estimated to account for 40% of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. Emissions are produced at all phases of the development process, including embodied carbon in the materials used, the construction process, and the operational phase.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment is therefore essential to help achieve the targets necessary to mitigate climate change, as set out in emerging Local Plan 2020 policy, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

This policy addresses the emissions from the operational phase of a building/development, in terms of heat and power. It does not address the emissions that come from the construction phase of the development or the transport movements generated by a development. These will be addressed by other policies in the plan.

The Policy seeks to ensure that new development (residential and non-residential) is built to high energy efficiency standards, uses renewable heating and cooling systems, and incorporates renewable energy generation. It also requires, where any residual carbon emissions remain, contributions towards carbon offsetting projects in the local area. It is therefore possible to achieve a net zero carbon standard where carbon emissions from the operation of a new development, in terms of heat and power, are effectively reduced to zero. At this stage, two policy options are presented under criterion 1.

We need new development to achieve net zero carbon from the outset, to help mitigate climate change. Retrofitting buildings is significantly more disruptive, costly and time-consuming than designing buildings to be net zero carbon in the first place.

POLICY WORDING:

1. **All new residential and non-residential development, will be required to achieve:**
 - **Policy Option 1: Net zero carbon (100% reduction in carbon emissions) from regulated energy use;**

or

 - **Policy Option 2: Net zero carbon (100% reduction in carbon emissions) from regulated and unregulated energy use.**

It should achieve this by being Certified Passivhaus (or equivalent), which includes a renewable source of energy for heating and hot water and incorporates renewable energy generation technology, or through meeting the following criteria sequentially:

- a. Minimising demand for heating, cooling, hot water, lighting and power through building and site level measures; then
- b. Meeting the residual heat demand through connection to a classified heat network or renewable heat sources; then
- c. Meeting residual cooling demand sustainably sequentially through:
 - i. passive cooling measures;
 - ii. mechanical ventilation; and finally
 - iii. active renewable measures; then
- d. Maximising on-site renewable energy generation; and then, if necessary,
- e. Offsetting any remaining residual carbon emissions via a contribution to a carbon offsetting project or fund within South Gloucestershire. The financial contribution required is set at £95 per tonne of carbon dioxide (or index linked equivalent from date of plan adoption) that would be emitted from the development over a period of 30 years.

Specific on-site requirements for Residential Development

2. All proposals for new residential development must:
 - a. minimise end user energy requirements over and above those required by Building Regulations (at the time of full planning or reserved matters approval) through energy efficiency measures by at least 10%, or, achieve any higher standard that is required under national planning policy; and then
 - b. reduce carbon dioxide emissions by maximising the use of renewable energy generation sources on site and achieve an overall on-site reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from regulated energy use of at least 50%, unless the development includes flats where a 35% reduction is acceptable (for that part of the site only).

Specific on-site requirements for Major Non- Residential Development

3. Non-residential development with floorspace over 1000 sq. metres will be required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from regulated energy use by at least 35% through energy efficiency measures (of which at least 15% must be achieved through improvements on a Building Regulations Part L 2013 (or later equivalent) compliant building), and, via the use of on-site renewable energy generation.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Policy Options

For residential development, two policy options are presented to achieve net zero carbon.

Option 1 requires residential development to reduce carbon emissions from regulated energy use by 100%. Regulated energy includes space heating, ventilation, hot water supply and lighting. Option 1 is 'viability on' – this means that the costs associated with this option have been tested through the Local Plan viability study. However, evidence [insert link] shows that costs are predicted to fall and other changes are expected to occur (for example, changes to the carbon factors used in the software (SAP) used for assessing compliance with Building Regulations) which will mean that it will become less costly to meet policy requirements.

Consequently, Option 2, policy which requires residential development to reduce carbon emissions from regulated and unregulated energy use by 100%, is also presented. Unregulated energy includes cooking, appliances and other small power consumption. Option 2 of the policy is currently a 'viability off' approach - in that the current assessment of costs has not been included in the Local Plan viability study. The expectation, based on evidence, is that this policy option will be viable and achievable in the near future for similar costs to those tested for Option 1. Therefore, as the Local Plan goes through the preparation process, evidence for costs will be re-assessed, and depending on the evidence and feedback from consultation, the Council will move to implement Option 2.

For non- residential development, only one policy option is presented which requires 100% reduction in carbon emissions (net zero carbon) arising from regulated energy use. This is because in non-residential development proposals it is difficult to assess the unregulated energy use as the end-user can vary widely and is not necessarily known. It is therefore not practical to require 100% reduction in both regulated and unregulated energy use.

Certified Passivhaus

In recognition of the high sustainability standards required to achieve a 'Certified Passivhaus' scheme, it is considered an alternative, and preferred, route to policy compliance. Passivhaus is an international energy standard for buildings. It sets stringent standards on energy consumption for heating and overall energy demand, and also sets design requirements to control the quality of the internal environment. Proposals seeking to follow this route will be required to provide evidence from a Passivhaus Certifier that the proposed design would be capable of and is expected to achieve the full certified Passivhaus standard, and incorporate renewable heating and renewable energy generation technology, in order to be 'net zero carbon'. This will be secured through use of planning conditions.

Sequential approach

For both residential and non-residential development, a sequential approach is set out in Clause 1 of the policy to guide the steps needed to achieve the 100% carbon emissions reduction requirement. It is important that as much is done on-site as possible to minimise energy demand, and maximise renewable energy use and generation. Therefore, specific minimum targets for energy efficiency and on-site measures are set out in Clauses 2 and 3. These targets will most likely be exceeded in practice, and the Council expects on-site measures to be maximised as far as possible. It is only in the development of flats where evidence has shown that it may be more difficult to meet a higher on-site target, so in these cases a 35% on-site target is set instead. Carbon offsetting through a contribution to the carbon offsetting fund is only expected in cases where residual carbon emissions cannot practically be met on-site.

Design measures

Firstly, the need to ensure that energy consumption is minimised through building and site level design measures must be addressed. To help satisfy Clause 1a, reference should be made to emerging Local Plan Policy 'Creating well-designed places' which provides detail on requirements for energy conservation and sustainable design, and climate resilience. Design measures can help to reduce the need for heating and cooling, as well as power.

Further detail regarding sustainable design and construction methods will be provided in a new policy, which will be brought forward through future stages of preparing the Local Plan 2020.

Heating

Clause 1b requires the residual heat demand of a development to be met through connection to a classified heat network or renewable heat source. This is necessary to ensure that heating systems are decarbonised and move away from fossil fuel systems (i.e. gas boilers).

A heat network (also known as 'district heating') refers to a network of insulated pipes, pumps, controls and thermal storage, used to transfer heat, as hot water, from a heat source to buildings and locations where it will be used. A classified heat network is a heat network with a definite plan to become 100% renewable within a reasonable time scale, is constructed to a high quality (in accordance with appropriate technical standards, currently CIBSE code of practice), offers a fair and affordable price to consumers, and provides annual reporting on their performance and carbon content. Reference should also be made to 'saved' Core Strategy Policy CS4 'Renewable or Low Carbon District Heat Networks'.

Renewable heat refers to the generation of heat from renewable sources including solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, former mine workings and biomass. Renewable heat technologies include air, ground or water source heat pumps, micro-heat networks using ground source heat pumps with shared ground arrays, and biomass. Heat pumps can also be used to provide cooling from the ground and water. Resistive electric heating (unless part of certified Passivhaus) is excluded.

Cooling

It is also important that any residual cooling demand is addressed sustainably, in order to avoid overheating risks and avoid the need for air conditioning. Therefore Clause 1c requires that after design measures to minimise the demand for cooling have been incorporated into the development then any residual cooling demand must be met sustainably through passive cooling measures, and then if necessary, through renewable mechanical ventilation measures and finally, renewable active cooling measures. The following hierarchy helps explain the approach to cooling required:

Minimise cooling demand by reducing internal heat gains e.g. hot water, lights, appliances, IT etc.; avoiding over-glazing; and by reducing solar gain and external temperature – through orientation, built form, massing, fixed, mobile and seasonal shading and green/ brown/blue infrastructure; then

Maximise passive cooling through natural ventilation, diurnal cooling, placement of thermal mass and green/ blue infrastructure; and then

Meet residual cooling demand renewably through:

Mechanical ventilation - Whole house ventilation, Building scale ventilation, including the integration of passive cooling; and then

Active cooling measures – renewable/low carbon cooling, ground source heat pumps.

The use of air conditioning systems is not a sustainable cooling option and should be avoided as it exacerbates carbon dioxide emissions and overheating risks.

Renewable energy generation

The fourth part of the sequential approach is for renewable energy generation technologies to be incorporated into development proposals as much as possible as set out in Clause 1d. The most common technologies are solar PV and also solar thermal. However, other technologies would be welcome too where appropriate.

Carbon offsetting

The contribution to the carbon offsetting fund set out under the fifth part of the sequence in Clause 1e should be used as a 'last resort' where it is not possible to achieve sufficient on-site measures to reduce the carbon emissions by 100%. The fund will be administered by the Council and will be collected via Section 106 agreements. The fund will be spent on low carbon projects within South Gloucestershire, such as renewable energy schemes, retrofitting of existing housing stock. The contribution is calculated at £95 per tonne of carbon per year for 30 years. The £95 will be index linked and therefore increase annually.

Specific on-site requirements

Clauses 2 and 3 of the policy set out specific on-site requirements. These are the minimum requirements for energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy generation that must be met. On-site measures should be prioritised over carbon offsetting payments. The Council's evidence shows that on certain sites and types of development much higher standards can be achieved on-site, and this will be encouraged.

Technical guidance

For clarity, the baseline against which residential development will be required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 100% is total residual energy use, which includes regulated (and unregulated – Policy option 2) energy use. This should be calculated using the latest Building Regulations Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of dwellings (SAP) methodology, which covers regulated energy use, and also includes guidance on estimating unregulated energy use. For non-residential development, regulated energy use only is required to be reduced by 100%.

Updated technical guidance will be prepared by the Council to accompany the policy and explain how we expect applicants to demonstrate that their development proposals comply with the policy requirements. For information existing guidance (to support existing policy PSP6) explains how to calculate the total residential energy use and can be viewed here (insert hyperlink).

The information that applicants will need to provide must, as a minimum:

Set out projected annual energy demands for regulated energy use heating, cooling, hot water, lighting and power from the proposed development using the target emissions rate (from current Building Regulations Part L standards at the time of full planning or relevant reserved matters approval); and

Set out the projected annual energy demands for unregulated energy use from the proposed development; and

Show how total projected annual energy demands have been reduced via energy efficiency measures, and set out the carbon dioxide emissions associated with the remaining energy demand and the % emissions saving that will be achieved; and

Set out the choice of sustainable heating/cooling systems and how these have been selected, and the residual carbon dioxide emissions that the development will generate after energy efficiency and sustainable heating/cooling have been taken into account; and

Demonstrate how the incorporation of on-site renewable energy has been maximised to offset residual carbon dioxide emissions; and

Set out whether a carbon offsetting contribution is required to mitigate any remaining carbon emissions.

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed policy approach?

Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Working Policy Title: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy System

Existing Policies

Core Strategy Policy CS3 – Renewable and low carbon energy generation
Partial replacement of CS4 – Renewable or low carbon district heat networks

PURPOSE:

Accelerating the decarbonisation and decentralisation of the energy system in the UK is essential to mitigating climate change. It can also bring wider environmental and economic benefits, and improve the security of our energy supply.

South Gloucestershire has the opportunity to increase renewable energy generation and facilitate development to enable a more flexible, smart, decentralised energy system. Doing so would help meet the Council's carbon reduction and renewable energy generation targets set out in emerging Local Plan 2020 policy Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

Policy support is therefore provided to development proposals which generate energy from renewable or low carbon sources and infrastructure that helps with the transition towards a smart energy system. Fossil fuel based energy installations will no longer be acceptable.

POLICY WORDING:

- 1. Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources, and proposals that support the transition to a smart energy system, will be acceptable where the wider environmental benefits outweigh any significant demonstrable harm to amenity.**

Proposals will be considered more favourably where they achieve 2 or more of the following criteria:

- a. Are located in areas identified as suitable for renewable energy development in the technical maps (to be included in the Appendices of the Local Plan); or**
- b. can demonstrate wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable or low carbon sources; or**
- c. secure reliable energy generation capacity; or**
- d. secure local economic benefits.**
- e. In the case of on-shore wind development, proposals must be located in areas identified as suitable and demonstrate community support.**

2. **Proposals to re-power existing wind turbine installations and solar farms will be acceptable.**
3. **Proposals for new energy generation installations/ proposals that support the transition to a smart energy system must demonstrate that the lowest emission and viable technology available has been used.**

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Renewable and/ or low carbon energy supplies include, but not exclusively, those from biomass and energy crops, combined heat and power, waste heat from industrial processes, energy from waste, ground, water and air source heating and cooling, hydro, solar thermal, solar photovoltaic generation and wind power.

A smart energy system is a 100% renewable energy system which maximises efficiencies and reduces costs. It is a broad, holistic approach to the energy system which integrates measures such as energy efficiency, energy storage, demand side response, and renewable energy generation (micro and macro scales) to create a flexible system that meets the need for energy in a timely, efficient and cost effective manner.

Proposals that support the transition to a smart energy system may include battery storage facilities. Their location will be governed by grid connection availability, and proposals will be more favourably considered where they form part of a renewable energy generation facility, or are located in industrial areas.

Clause 1a refers to the identification of suitable areas. To this end, we are updating our evidence base through preparing a Renewable Energy Resource Assessment Study (RERAS), and through doing so we will identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy generation and related infrastructure. The outcome of this work will be presented at future stages or preparing the Local Plan 2020. Further evidence, for example, landscape sensitivity assessments, will be gathered and used to help inform decision-making on planning applications that come forward.

The 'wider environmental benefits' referred to in Clause 1b include carbon dioxide reduction.

With regard to Clause 2, a map of existing renewable energy installations will be produced (and updated as appropriate) and published on our Local Plan webpages (under the 'Evidence base' section) This clause allows for older, existing infrastructure to be upgraded with modern/ more efficient technology.

As with any development proposal, applicants are expected to engage with the local community and seek to generate support and address any concerns highlighted. Communities are becoming more aware of the need for renewable energy development proposals in light of climate change and the move towards a low carbon economy. It is important to engage with local communities at an early stage in the development process. Proposals that include an element of community ownership, or are from the community energy sector, are encouraged.

Income generation for community infrastructure purposes does not form a material consideration in planning decisions. However, it can occur by a legal agreement that guarantees to pay a percentage of the income generated by selling heat or electricity to the grid, into a Community Trust Fund, or other suitable mechanism, controlled by the local community for spending on other local infrastructure and energy efficiency initiatives.

We are considering how to safeguard areas that have renewable energy potential from development that may sterilise the resource. For example, we are considering identifying safeguarding areas where proposals for other types of development would not be permitted if they would unacceptably sterilise the renewable or low carbon energy development for which they are safeguarded.

Questions

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Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

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Working Policy Title:

Creating well-designed places

Existing Policies

Core Strategy Policy CS1 (High Quality Design) & Policies Sites and Places Plan policy PSP1 (Local Distinctiveness)

PURPOSE:

South Gloucestershire encompasses large areas of distinctive and high quality built and natural/rural landscape, which should be safeguarded and enhanced, and where possible, incorporated into development proposals.

The aim of this design policy is to shape and direct development proposals to create resilient and exceptional places, spaces, and buildings in South Gloucestershire. A range of other policies in the Local Plan 2020 will provide further detail and clarification to many of the points contained in this policy. This policy is also supported by the emerging Urban Lifestyles approach, which aims to make efficient use of land in urban areas, by optimising development.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear in that ‘Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions...’

The provisions and requirements set out in this policy will ensure all development meets a high level of design quality, addresses the Climate Emergency and leads to more sustainable development, places and spaces.

10 Key Design Characteristics

The 10 characteristics from the NDG have been used to assist in the assessment of proposed design quality. The 10 characteristics (except ‘built form’ and ‘movement’) have been grouped into related pairs:

1. **Context** – local and wider context, heritage, local history and culture
2. **Identity** – creating and responding to local character and identity
3. **Built form** – compact development, appropriate building types and forms, destinations
4. **Movement** – integrated networks for all travel modes, hierarchy of streets, parking and utilities
5. **Nature** – green open spaces, landscape variety, play, water management, biodiversity
6. **Public spaces** – well-located and attractive spaces, safety, social interaction
7. **Uses** – uses mix, range of home tenures, types and sizes, socially inclusive

8. **Homes & buildings** – healthy, comfortable and safe, external amenity, detailing, waste provision
9. **Resources** – energy hierarchy, materials and techniques, maximise resilience
10. **Lifespan** – management and maintenance, adaptability, evolving technologies, sense of ownership

POLICY WORDING:

Context and identity

Development proposal(s) must demonstrate an understanding of, and respond constructively to the building and landscape characteristics that make a particularly positive contribution to the distinctiveness and identity of the area. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. The siting, form, scale, height, massing, detailing, colour and materials of the development respect, and are informed by, the positive locally-distinctive qualities of both the site and its surrounding context; and
- b. A new distinctive character has been created, based on positive features found in the wider area, including any heritage assets or landscape features, where high quality distinctive features do not exist either within or around the site. Significant weight will be given to outstanding or innovative designs which respond to positive, locally distinctive features.

Built form

The layout and form of the development must combine to form a well-designed and legible environment, which is attractive and functions well for all users. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. The scale and massing of the built form relates to the site and the local character surrounding the development, with minimal amenity impacts relating to overlooking, over-shadowing and over-bearing issues;
- b. Construction materials are locally distinctive, complementary when viewed as a collection, and appropriate for their use and function, with a focus on robustness and a positive visual appearance over time;
- c. The arrangement and design of windows (the fenestration) is visually attractive, balanced and functional. The use of larger windows for habitable rooms will be supported;
- d. The orientation and siting of buildings contribute to the definition of the public realm and the visual quality of the street scene, where building facades and front doors face the street, to promote overlooking and activity within the public realm. Blank and inactive ground floor elevations should be avoided; and
- e. In appropriate areas and sites, Urban Lifestyles principles will be applied, to make the best use of land by optimising densities and providing a mix of uses, leading to the creation of compact, efficient, and healthy urban areas.

Movement

Development proposals must create or enable sustainable connections to destinations, places and communities, both within the site and beyond its boundaries. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. The layout integrates with existing or permitted adjacent development and connects with the wider network of foot, cycle and public transport links, including Public Rights of Way and strategic green infrastructure corridors/routes;
- b. Safe and sustainable access to existing and proposed “Key Services & Facilities” is provided or enhanced, through a range of transport options, giving priority to sustainable travel modes, such as walking and cycling;
- c. Permeable space(s) and accessible route(s) through a development have been created, allowing clear, safe, and direct movement, taking account of desire lines where appropriate; and
- d. Any parking provided is well-designed, conveniently sited, safe, overlooked, well-landscaped and sensitively integrated into the public realm or built form, so that it does not dominate the street scene. It must meet the needs of all users, including visitors and people with disabilities.

Nature and public spaces

Development proposal(s) will be expected to protect and enhance the natural environment and its features of landscape, nature conservation, heritage, or amenity value, particularly in the AONB, in and around designated national and local sites. Where public realm is required or provided, it should be accessible, attractive, functional, safe, varied, and interesting, to encourage social interaction. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. High quality and well-considered green and blue infrastructure has been included to an appropriate level, and appropriately designed to contribute towards the vision and strategic objectives of the locality. Where trees are provided within areas of public realm, suitable below ground provision must be made to ensure their longevity;
- b. Net gains for biodiversity, tree cover and landscape diversity have been achieved. Good quality and positive existing trees and vegetation should be retained and protected;
- c. Where appropriate, well-located, attractive, and safe open spaces and play areas, which enhance social interaction and which offer opportunities for formal and informal play and rest, should be provided;
- d. Where appropriate, site-specific public art features are provided, in order to add visual and cultural interest, and to create a connection to the site’s history, existing landscape or built qualities;
- e. Boundary treatments and any interfaces between public and private areas are robust and built to be long-lasting, define the public realm, clearly establish the difference between public and private spaces, and avoids small areas of incidental open spaces; and

- f. **The most appropriate and robust materials, street furniture and finishes have been utilised, to create a sense of place which has variety and interest, while not adding clutter within the street scene. Any good-quality existing surface materials, boundary treatments and street furniture have, wherever possible, been retained in situ.**

Uses, homes and buildings

Developments at any scale must function well and create positive and adaptable living environments. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. **Buildings and public realm have been provided which have potential to be adaptable over time, to accommodate a range of uses and potential occupiers, being socially inclusive, accessible and tenure blind. Major housing development(s) should provide a range of home tenures, types and sizes, to meet local housing need and market demand;**
- b. **Safe, secure and healthy living, working, recreation and travelling environments have been provided, where opportunities for criminal activities are designed out, secure and appropriately sized private amenity areas are created, and the design of the public realm promotes activity and social engagement;**
- c. **An appropriate level of infrastructure to enable high quality digital connectivity has been designed into the development.**
- d. **An appropriate level of space and facilities are provided and designed into the development for the sorting and storage of recyclable waste materials, the composting of household waste, and the collection of these and other waste materials; and**
- e. **Good internal storage has been provided, which meets the expected day-to-day needs of a range of potential occupiers, by designing new homes and community facilities which as a minimum meet the Nationally Described Space Standard (or replacement of it).**

Resources and lifespan

The conservation of natural resources, including land, water, energy and materials in buildings and development, will form part of the strategy to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, helping to provide well-designed places over the longer-term. Acceptable development proposal(s) must demonstrate that;

- a. **A layout, form and mix of uses is established which reduces resource requirements, both during construction and operation, and which contributes to the creation of compact and walkable neighbourhoods. Developments should be adaptable over time to reduce the need for redevelopment processes;**
- b. **Locally-sourced and sustainable materials will be used where appropriate to minimise energy use and embodied carbon emissions;**
- c. **Climate adaptation has been maximised, with resilience to projected climate change, through the orientation, aspect, and siting of development to optimise solar gain, while avoiding creating potential for over-heating over the lifetime of the development; and**
- d. **Where possible, renewable and low carbon energy installations and infrastructure have been incorporated. Steps should be taken to mitigate the visual impact of any such installations.**

SUPPORTING TEXT:

'The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.' (The National Design Guide). Creating well-designed places requires an understanding of a wide range of principles, across numerous disciplines. Therefore, this policy draws on and supports a wide range of emerging plan priorities, other emerging policies in the Local Plan 2020, area based objectives, as well as the supporting planning documents.

The design process should be supported by a range of design tools, including well-considered and informative design and access statements which include context and character appraisals, design review panels, masterplans, and design codes.

① Context and Identity

Para 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that developments are, 'sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).'

There are a wide range of built and landscape characters which exist within South Gloucestershire, ranging from mature urban locations, such as, Staple Hill, Kingswood, Hanham, post war suburban areas such as Filton, Bradley Stoke, newer communities at Charlton Hayes and Stoke Gifford, market Towns with different characters and wide range of villages set within different rural contexts. A character and context appraisal should be provided within the design and access statement to support a planning application, and to show how the local context has been considered and taken into account in the design of the development.

It remains common for developers, in undertaking a context appraisal, to attempt to justify further indistinct development by referring to usually 20th century post-war development of indistinct quality nearby and/or claiming that the locality lacks distinction by way of the variety of ages and styles of development that exist in the area. In justifying new development in accordance with the NPPF requirements, this approach will not be acceptable. It may be necessary for context and character appraisals to look further afield than the immediate locality or most numerous buildings in an area to identify and respond to distinctive building types and other features of quality, such as boundary treatments, plot size and shape, and landscape treatments, to inform new development.

Conservation Area Appraisals, Village Design Statements and The South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment may, where available, in the vicinity of a development, also provide good sources of information that assist in discerning such distinctive local character.

② Built form

The design and placement of built forms defines spaces and has a significant impact on people's daily lives. The design of buildings should help to enable the creation of well-designed public realm, parking and landscape to emerge through the design process.

In establishing a character or identity of a development, the surrounding context is important to consider and reference. This process should allow for some flexibility to support innovative design approaches and be based on the most positive character elements found in the area. Legibility, or the understanding of a place, can be created by sequences of natural or built landmark features, and by ensuring that views through a site terminate at landmarks, such as a mature tree or interesting new façade.

The existing and future development potential of adjoining sites, or the potential for the area to achieve a coherent, interconnected, and integrated built form, must not be prejudiced by proposals. Where such potential may reasonably exist, including on sites with different use or ownership, development will be expected to either progress with a comprehensive scheme or, by means of its layout and form, enable a co-ordinated approach to be adopted towards adjoining sites future development.

Urban Lifestyles is an emerging approach for South Gloucestershire, and is explained and set out in more detail in section 6 of the Phase 1 Issues and Approaches consultation document. Broadly, this new approach aims to optimise development sites, by making more efficient use of land in sustainable urban locations, as required by paras 122 and 123 of the NPPF. Locations which are highly accessible and provided with public transport options, and close to employment, shops and services, are being investigated as part of this process. Higher residential densities will form a key part of this approach, balanced by lower parking requirements and a focus on the quality of the public realm.

③ Movement

Safe, convenient, sustainable and direct movement between areas of the district is an integral part of well-designed places. Access to homes, jobs and services should be promoted and enhanced through the design process.

Key Services and Facilities and appropriate walking & cycling distances to them will be defined in a proposed new policy Sustainable Travel & Access, which will be brought forward in future stages of the Local Plan. They are currently defined in policy PSP11 Transport Impact Management, the proposed new policy will eventually replace PSP11.

The use of rear parking courts often results in an inefficient use of land, and can result in valuable private amenity space being lost. Surveillance and overlooking into rear parking courts can be restricted by property boundaries meaning residents do not have a direct view of their vehicles. This form of parking solution will therefore only be acceptable where significant and direct overlooking from habitable rooms of properties is provided and where other more secure solutions are not possible due to site constraints.

④ Nature and public spaces

Below ground provision for trees within public realm, such as root protection and growth systems, is often needed to ensure the proper growth and longevity of the tree.

Any lighting of the public realm or individual buildings should be appropriate to the intended use and functioning of the development, contribute to actual and perceived safety and avoid negative impacts on residents, as well as existing or proposed wildlife and ecology.

⑤ Use, homes and buildings

Developments should be adaptable over time, in order to be able to accommodate changing work/home, employment and shopping patterns, and people potentially choosing to stay in their homes for longer into older age. These shifting patterns make it more important to create well-designed living environments, with good storage spaces, natural light and views, with access to a range of quality private and public open spaces and public realm. A proposed new policy “inclusive design” will set out expectations in relation to accessible and adaptable development, including residential development, that policy is proposed to eventually replace existing policy PSP37 Internal Space and Accessibility Standards for Affordable Dwellings.

High quality and fast digital infrastructure will be expected in new development, the expectation and criteria of which will be contained in a proposed new policy “Digital Connectivity & Broadband”, which will be brought forward in future stages of the Local Plan 2020. The design of new development will need to consider ducting and provision for digital infrastructure to ensure it is well integrated into site design and development to allow maintenance and servicing and avoid negative impacts on the quality of places and spaces.

Housing developments must be tenure blind/inclusive, with the same attention to detail and use of high-quality materials and boundary treatments used in affordable housing provision as market housing. Parking to fronts should be enhanced by the use of finer paving materials and attention to landscaping between spaces – essentially creating good ‘driveways’.

Waste storage and collection must be carefully considered in any form of development, but waste provision in residential developments in particular, must be well-integrated, visually appealing, and functional. In terraced houses, space for the storage of a range of waste and recycling bins or containers, can be successfully integrated into the fronts of properties, in screened storage structures, which can also be integrated within porch canopies, also providing bike storage and electrical car-charging cables.

6 Resources and lifespan

Well-designed places should seek to maximise the contributions of natural resources such as the sun, ground heat and wind, and include passive measures for light, temperature, ventilation and heat. They should aim to make use of renewable energy infrastructures, such as photovoltaic arrays, ground source heat pumps and district heating systems, to reduce demand for non-sustainable energy sources.

In terms of mitigating or limiting the impacts from solar gain in developments, relatively straightforward design solutions exist, such as incorporating bris soleil, projecting canopies or the planting of deciduous trees.

It may be appropriate in certain situations to retain and renovate existing buildings, where this forms part of a more sustainable approach to development, or where existing structures have local historic significance. This approach can have significant visual, community and conservation benefits. The criteria and expectations in relation to the use of resources, materials and re-use of buildings will be contained in a proposed new policy “Sustainable Design and Construction”, which will be brought forward in future stages of the Local Plan 2020.

Questions

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Working Policy Title:

Parking Requirements, including Electric Vehicles

Existing Policies

Policies Sites and Places Plan policy PSP16: Parking Standards

USE CLASSES ORDER (SEPTEMBER 2020) UPDATE:

Recent updates to national legislation has resulted in changes to the Use Classes Order. The changes to the Order specifically relates to the way that retail, employment and leisure uses are classified. Although these changes are not reflected in this current draft, the council will continue to review the impact of the Order on the proposed schedules and will reflect updates where necessary in later drafts of this policy. This will allow the council time to understand the potential impacts these changes may have.

PURPOSE:

What is the current approach to Parking Standards?

Current Parking Standards in South Gloucestershire can be found in the Policies, Sites and Places Plan PSP16 Parking Standards with elements in the Core Strategy policy CS8 and further detail in the Residential Parking Supplementary Planning Document. This current policy applies a district wide standard for bicycle and car parking spaces for residential properties.

Is the current approach still the right approach?

Since the Core Strategy and the Policies, Sites and Places Plans were adopted we have entered into period of significant challenge and change. New technology, different attitudes and direction from national policy means a new approach can be explored to help meet the numerous challenges that continue to face South Gloucestershire. We have to accept however that we are likely to be in a period of transition which might well extend beyond the timeframe of the Local Plan: we will need to plan from what we currently know, but also build in sufficient flexibility to enable our approach to adjust as new arrangements start to replace the current approach.

Below are some of the key changes that will influence a new approach.

- Updated National Planning Policy Framework in 2019;
- Climate emergency declared nationally and in South Gloucestershire with a focus to decarbonise travel and reduce reliance on private car journeys in carbonised vehicles;
- Levels of car ownership and commuting are high, creating congestion;

- Improving air quality across South Gloucestershire especially in declared Air Quality Management Areas;
- New advancements in electric vehicle and other technology making these options more viable; and
- There is a need to make the most efficient use of land, particularly in our urban areas.

Parking standards will form an important part in enabling and controlling car parking, including electric vehicle charging provision and bicycle parking provision, which alongside other policies will supporting the objectives to enable the new approach.

Investigating a new approach

The Council proposes a new approach to parking standards that better reflects the changes that we need to make in how we live and work in the future in order for us to live more sustainably. This policy must work in combination with other aspects of the plan and also changes likely to happen outside of planning. South Gloucestershire is a diverse area consisting of the urban edges of Bristol, market towns and rural communities and the new approach seeks to create parking standards that reflect these diverse environments. The policy must also acknowledge and reflect that we are in a period of transition, and help support the process of moving from established practices to the new approaches which will better support our sustainability objectives in the medium and longer term.

Different standards for different parts of the district?

It is proposed that the policy looks at a zoning approach to allow for reduced car parking provision in areas which are demonstrably well connected with ample opportunities for walking and cycling access to key services and facilities as well as good public transport provision. Good public transport provision relates to a close / walkable distance to bus stops and or railway stations; frequency of services; locations that are served by the routes including key destinations and facilities not found locally, and journey times to those destinations and facilities. The zones proposed therefore focus on parts of the district outlined as Urban Lifestyle areas. These would be focussed around designated town centres and transport hubs.

It is not proposed that a blanket reduction be applied in these areas as individual sites may be more (or less) suitable to a reduction but instead sets out areas where it is suitable for a reduction in car parking space provision. This will also support the objectives of Urban Lifestyles and the NPPF, making efficient use of land and freeing up space that would otherwise be used for car parking provision to allow much needed open spaces where higher densities will make land in short supply.

How will we know what level of parking provision is suitable on a site within the zone?

The Council proposes that developments within the urban zone (seen on the indicative map below) must submit a SGC Accessibility Assessment. When applied this will indicate whether a reduction in car parking provision is appropriate. This will give a figure for the suitable reduction in car parking provision as a percentage reduction against the standard guidance in the Schedules below. Although the specific criteria has not been finalised it is expected that a percentage reduction will be based on the individual site circumstances and accessibility, for example looking at current on street parking issues as well as access to services and facilities and alternative modes of transport.

The Council will also explore how a percentage reduction in car parking provision could allow a percentage increase in cycle parking provision, however the details of how this may work are yet to be determined.

It is also important that the SGC Accessibility Assessment does not overburden developers or officers and so work continues on developing the specific assessment. However we believe the assessment will focus on the key criteria below:

Local access to key services and facilities and their accessibility by walking and cycling;

Proximity, frequency and access to public transport with connections to key facilities and locations (Bus and Metrobus and Rail); and

Existing and potential parking management issues and solutions within the area.

Electric Vehicle charging provision

The most up to date census data outlines that South Gloucestershire has a higher level of vehicle ownership per household than the national average. Although the current climate would suggest that this may be a reversing trend it is also clear that for many the private car will remain the primary option of travel in the short to medium term at least. In order to meet the objectives outlined in the plan the Council proposes to future proof development now in order to allow for an electric vehicle revolution.

The provision of electric vehicle charging in South Gloucestershire will be especially important for more rural areas where access to other modes of transport will be limited. However it is not a replacement for the provision of infrastructure to promote other modes of transport such as walking/cycling and public transport services.

Planning out space for private vehicle parking to create better places

We recognise that in the short and medium term at least there will still be a need to ensure that sufficient parking provision is provided for private vehicles, on and off development sites. However, in the medium and longer term if more sustainable travel choices become more widely available and used, there will be an opportunity to repurpose the spaces allocated for parking, towards more beneficial uses. This might be to increase private living or amenity space or public realm improvements, for example. We need to make sure that current private and on-street parking provision is designed so that it can relatively easily be repurposed if the need for it diminishes.

What evidence base will support the policy?

Evidence to support the policy can be found below:

Jacobs Parking Standards Review

Electric Vehicle charging in local plan policy

This is also supported by existing information on vehicles ownership and use in South Gloucestershire gathered through the 2011 census, however it is recognised that this was gathered nine years ago and a new census is due in 2021.

POLICY WORDING:**Car Parking Provision**

1. New development proposal(s) will be acceptable where an appropriate level of car parking is provided. The appropriate level of car parking for three types of development, across different areas of the district is provided in:
 - Schedule A – Residential
 - Schedule B – Non-Residential
 - Schedule C – Disabled Persons Parking
 - Developments within the ‘parking zones’ will be required to undertake an Accessibility Assessment. This will determine any appropriate reduction in parking provision, to that set out in the schedules.
2. There should be no increase in on-street parking in the vicinity of the site which would detrimentally affect highway safety and/or residential amenity.
3. Development proposals which are providing car parking spaces are required to integrate an appropriate number of spaces which make provision for infrastructure that enables the charging of electric or other Ultra-Low Emission vehicles. The appropriate proportion of active and passive Electric Vehicle charging spaces is set out for residential (Schedule A) and non-residential (Schedule B) development proposals.
4. In circumstances where off-street parking is not provided within a development proposal and requires the use of on-street parking space, the design and layout of the development must incorporate infrastructure to enable the on-street charging of electric or other Ultra-Low Emission vehicles. This on-street charging infrastructure must not obstruct the footway.
5. Loading / unloading; waiting and drop off/ pick up areas will be considered as appropriate depending on requirements for each sites use(s).

183

Electric and Ultra Low Vehicle charging provision

All individual dwellings with one or more dedicated parking spaces or garage must include provision for 7Kw (32 amp) charging infrastructure suitable for charging an electric or other ultra-low emission vehicle. At least one parking space per dwelling must have active³² charging provision, with the remainder passive³³ provision.

- For residential development with communal off street parking provision, at least 20 per cent of spaces are required to have active charging facilities, and passive provision is required for all remaining spaces;
- High density and/or large scale residential / mixed use developments are additionally required to facilitate the provision of an electric or ultra-low emission car club, and provide dedicated space for the club with active charging facilities;

³² Active Provision: An active OLEV compliant chargepoint, such that each dwelling has the opportunity to charge their vehicle at the same time with a total charging time not exceeding 8 hours.

³³ Passive Provision: Establishing all of the associated cables, chambers and junctions to allow for charging points to be installed without the need for undertaking works that require breaking ground.

- **All non-residential developments (e.g. retail, office, leisure) which include vehicular parking must include as a minimum passive infrastructure to enable the future provision of electric charging facilities;**
- **For all non-residential developments providing 10 or more parking bays, at least 20% of those bays are required to provide active charging facilities for electric or other ultra-low vehicles.**

In all developments where provision is made for taxi stopping the taxi spaces are required to include active charging facilities.

Motorcycle Parking Provision

For all developments, (except residential developments and those where there is no on-site car parking provision proposed) provision should be made for motorcycles and powered two wheelers equal to 3% of the number of car parking spaces required.

Cycle Parking Provision

New development proposal(s) will be acceptable where an appropriate level of cycle parking is provided. The appropriate level of cycle parking for different types of development is provided in Schedule D.

New builds will be expected to meet the standards set out in Schedule D. Conversions will also be expected to meet the standard, unless it can be demonstrated that individual site circumstances/constraints will not allow this.

Schedule A: Car Parking Provision Standards – Residential

Type	Standard Minimum spaces	Urban Lifestyle Zone (Blue areas on map above)
1 Bed dwelling	1	<p>Percentage reduction; to be demonstrated by SGC Accessibility Assessment* calculation with supporting evidence.</p>
2 Bed dwelling	1.5	
3 Bed dwelling	2	
4 bed dwelling	2	
5+ bed dwelling	3	
HMO	½ space per bedroom rounded up	
Visitor spaces per dwelling (>5 dwellings only)	0.2	

*Any reduction in minimum residential parking standards will require the completion of the SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation which will form the basis for any discount from the prescribed standard.

Schedule B: Car Parking Provision Standards – Non Residential

Land Use	Standard guidance	Urban Lifestyle Zone
A1** Retail	Below 1000sqm 1 space per 35sqm	Percentage reduction; to be demonstrated by SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation with supporting evidence.
	Above 1000sqm Food: 1 space per 14sqm; Non Food 1 space per 20sqm	
A2** Financial and Professional Services	1 space per 35sqm	Percentage reduction; to be demonstrated by SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation with supporting evidence.
A3** Restaurants and Cafes and public houses	1 space per 5sqm dining area or public drinking area	Percentage reduction; to be demonstrated by SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation with supporting evidence.
B1** Office, Light Industrial, R&D, Laboratories	1 space per 35sqm	
B2 General Industry	1 space per 50sqm	
B8 Storage, Distribution & Warehousing	1 space per 200sqm	
C1 Hotels	1 space per bedroom	
Other Land Use Types	Discuss with local authority	

** the use classes noted above refer to the Order prior to the September 2020 amendments. Future policy drafts will incorporate the new use classes once there is a greater understanding of their potential impacts on these schedules.

Schedule C: Disabled User Parking Provision

Land Use	Parking Provision Minimum Standard	Notes
Shopping, leisure, recreation and other uses requiring public access and employment	In addition to and equal to 5% of the level of parking derived from Schedule B	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Car parking spaces should be clearly identified for blue badge holders only and should be located so as to allow easy access to the building they serve 2. A minimum of 1 space should be provided, where calculations produce a figure of less than one whole space. 3. Where development is to take place without on-site parking, the availability of parking for disabled people in public/ shared car parking needs to be reassessed and additional provision funded by the development if appropriate. The availability of on-street parking for disabled people may also be taken into consideration.

Schedule D: Cycle Parking Provision Standards

Type of land use	Per	Proposed cycle parking standards. Minimum provision required
Shops, services less than 3,000m ² gross floor area (GFA) (A1**, A2**)	100m ² GFA staff	2 visitor spaces 1*
Food retail over 3,000m ² (A1** only)	1,000m ² staff	24 visitor spaces 1*
Non-food retail over 3,000m ² (A1**, A2**)	1,000m ² Staff	20 visitor spaces 1*
Garden centres, including those attached to other retail premises	Indoors: 1,000m ² Outdoors: 1,000m ² Staff	10 visitor spaces 10 visitor spaces 1*
Motor vehicle services (garage, workshops, car sales, car hire)		To be determined on merit
Restaurants, cafes (A3**). Pubs, Drinking Establishments (A4**)	dining area 100m ² bar/dance floor 100m ² Staff	5 visitor spaces 8 visitor spaces 1*
Hot food takeaway (A5**)	100 m ² Staff	2 visitor spaces 1*
Offices, studios, laboratories (B1**)	100m ² Staff	2 visitor spaces 1*
Light industry (B1**)	100 m ² Staff	1 visitor space 1*
General industrial (B2)	1,000 m ² Staff	2 visitor spaces 1*
Warehouses, repositories	1,000 m ² Staff	1 visitor space 1*
Hotels, motels, guest houses (C1)	10 bedrooms dining area 100m ² bar/dance floor 100m ² Staff	1 2.5 4 1*
Multiple occupation/bedsits (C4)	Unit / bedroom	1 secure, undercover space

* secure, undercover space(s) per 8 employees;

** the use classes noted above refer to the Order prior to the September 2020 amendments. Future policy drafts will incorporate the new use classes once there is a greater understanding of their potential impacts on these schedules.

Type of land use	Per	Proposed cycle parking standards. Minimum provision required
Student accommodation (Sui Generis/C3/C1)	Unit / bedroom	1 secure, undercover space
General Hospital (C2)	in patients: 100 beds	10
	day surgery: 100 beds	10
	outpatients suite	2
	accident units (10,000 visits per annum)	3
	staff	1 per 2 employees
Other hospitals and nursing homes (C2)	in patients: 100 beds	10
	day surgery: 100 beds	10
	outpatients suite	2
	Staff	1*
Dwellings with garage (C3)	1 bed space/bedroom unit	1 (provided garage design accommodation both car and cycle storage). Otherwise 1 secure, undercover space
	2 or more bedrooms	2 secure, undercover spaces
Newly built and converted dwellings without garage (C3)	1 bed space/bedroom unit	1 secure, undercover space
	2 or more bedrooms	2 secure, undercover spaces
Places of worship (D1**)	100 seats	5
Health Centres, doctors surgery, dentist surgery, veterinary surgery (D1**)	consulting room	1
	staff	1*
Day nurseries/ playgroups, crèches (D1**)	staff	1*
Community centres, family centres/family resource centre (D1**)	Visitor	To be determined on merit
	staff	1*
Primary schools (Non-residential) (D1**)	visitor/parents	1 per 100 pupils
	staff	1*
	students	To be determined on merit

* secure, undercover space(s) per 8 employees;
 ** the use classes noted above refer to the Order prior to the September 2020 amendments. Future policy drafts will incorporate the new use classes once there is a greater understanding of their potential impacts on these schedules.

Type of land use	Per	Proposed cycle parking standards. Minimum provision required
Secondary schools (Non-residential) (D1 ^{**})	visitor/parents	1 per 200 pupils
	staff	1*
	students	1 per 5
Colleges, University (Non-residential) (D1 ^{**})	Visitor	1 per 500 students
	Staff	1 per 2
	students	1 per 2
Churches, exhibition halls (D1 ^{**}), stadia and spectator facilities, cinemas, bingo halls (D2 ^{**}), and theatres (Sui-Generis)	100 fixed seats	5
	(open hall) 100m2	2.5
Multi-screen cinema (D2 ^{**})	100 seats	6
	staff	1*
Sports hall; indoor bowls; health club/ gymnasium; Ice rink/ swimming pool (D2 ^{**})	100m2 ; 100m2 rink/pool	2
	Staff	1*
Bowling centres (D2 ^{**})	10 lanes	8
	staff	1*
Tennis courts, squash courts, playing fields (D2 ^{**})	per court/pitch	2
Golf courses	18 hole	To be determined on merit
	9 hole	To be determined on merit
Golf driving range (D2 ^{**})	10 tees	To be determined on merit
Marinas	10 berths	3
Museums and libraries (D1 ^{**})	spaces per 100m2	4
	staff	1*
Public transport interchanges	Visitor	To be determined on merit
	staff	

* secure, undercover space(s) per 8 employees;

** the use classes noted above refer to the Order prior to the September 2020 amendments. Future policy drafts will incorporate the new use classes once there is a greater understanding of their potential impacts on these schedules.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Motorcycle and Other Powered Two Wheelers

Motorcycle and other powered two wheelers can offer an affordable means of movement for trips where public transport is limited and walking and cycling unrealistic. They have a role to play not just at the West of England scale but also at the local level, where they can provide a space-efficient alternative to driving, where walking, cycling and public transport trips are not possible. They can provide a more economical alternative to private car use and enable access to opportunities and flexibility that cannot otherwise be gained.

Providing specific parking provision for powered two wheelers allows a more efficient use of the parking area as otherwise car parking spaces will be less efficiently used. The segregated areas also allow consideration of sheltered provision

Urban Lifestyle and Accessibility Approach

Car Parking Standards for both residential and non-residential developments within certain areas are looking to move towards a flexible approach relating to the accessibility of the development location, with the most accessible locations requiring the lowest car parking provision.

The neighbourhoods that are within walkable distance of key facilities and services; are adjacent to key public transport hubs including UWE, Cribbs Causeway, Yate shopping centre or within ideal walking distance of rail stations with good services to key destinations, will be considered for reduced minimum car parking provision as the choice of travel options favours non-car travel.

Zonal Approach

A planning designation of “Parking zones”, for certain urban parts of the authority, to indicate where reduced parking provision may be appropriate, would be progressed as part of this approach. The zones are areas of the district considered to have a high level of access to services and facilities and high level of public transport connections. Within the zones applications would need to be supported by an SGC Accessibility Assessment.

Please refer to the map under Schedule A which outlines indicatively where these zones could be.

Accessibility Assessment

The proposed SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation is designed to assess development sites by weighting site specific local circumstances, (nearby facilities; walking, cycling and public transport provision) against existing parking issues and potential solutions, in order to encourage the use of sustainable travel including public transport through a reduction in proposed parking provision in areas of high connectivity. Parking issues arise where demand exceeds the parking supply which can create difficulties for safe travel for pedestrians, cyclist and motorists and access problems, including access for waste collection and emergency services. Where this is the case it is important that the Accessibility Assessment records these and any other parking issues. This will allow council officers to make an informed and sensible judgement, balancing the aspirations of the policy whilst allowing flexibility to respond to site specific parking issues. There are some existing areas of where known parking issues exist, including the area around Kingswood High Street; Kings Drive and surrounding cul-de-sacs in Stoke Gifford; Hoopers Walk, Longwell Green; Edgeware Road, Staple Hill; St Barnabus Close, Warmley; Elmleigh Close, Mangotsfield; Lower Station Road, Staple Hill, and Whitsun Leaze within the relatively new development at Charlton Hayes, Patchway.

The Accessibility Assessment can be used to justify a development site's departure from the prescribed parking standards set out in this policy and must be completed for developments within the urban zone. The Assessment is expected to be undertaken by the developer as part of their Transport Assessment/Statement. Further information on the SGC Accessibility Assessment calculation will be brought forward through a revised Parking Standards SPD.

Residential Parking Supplementary Planning Document

Alongside this new policy approach will be an update to the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document. This will be updated as part of the Development Plan and particularly provide further guidance on the following:

- Further guidance on the Accessibility Assessment and Zoning approach
- Further guidance on technical standards for parking provision

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed policy approach?

Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Working Policy Title:

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Related Development

Existing Policies

Core Strategy Policy CS36 – Proposals for Major Infrastructure Projects

PURPOSE:

To set out SGC approach to discharging its:

Largely discretionary role as pre-consent consultee on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), and

Role as determining authority role for development related to NSIPs; and

Post consent role in determining applications to discharge requirements / conditions and as enforcement authority.

Policy to:

cover all stages of scheme development from early pre-application engagement through to post consent implementation and Discharge of Requirements; and

recognise the need for engagement to be proportionate to the potential scale and extent of impacts on South Gloucestershire and its communities.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are large-scale projects of national importance (defined in the Planning Act 2008) such as new trunk roads, airports, ports, power stations (including nuclear), electricity transmission lines, waste water treatment works and chemical works. Such projects are often of a scale and complexity that may have wide ranging effects, both positive and negative, on local communities, the economy and the local area.

Applications for Development Consent Orders (DCOs) for NSIPs are made to the Planning Inspectorate (PINs), who examine and test the proposals against criteria on national need, benefits and impacts as set out in relevant policy.

Development proposals for NSIPs are primarily assessed, examined and determined by National Policy Statements EN-1 and EN-6. Up to the point of consent, the local authority role on NSIPs is largely discretionary and is as a consultee to the planning and examination process.

However, the local planning authority may also highlight local issues and local planning policy that are considered to be important and relevant that the examining body can take

into account when assessing and making recommendations on a DCO application.

In addition to a NSIP application, local authorities may be the decision maker for any elements of associated or related development not included within the main DCO application, and national policy will be a material consideration in determining these applications as appropriate. The local authority is also responsible for discharging 'Requirements' (akin to planning conditions) following the grant of a Development Consent Order. For these applications, consistency with the Development Consent Order and relevant certified documentation is the primary consideration, but national and local policy may also be relevant. The local authority is also the enforcement authority post consent.

Further information on the NSIP process, including relevant legislation, guidance advice and roles of the various parties may be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website³⁴.

POLICY WORDING:

1. **In its role either as determining authority for planning applications, or as consultee for applications to other bodies, the Council will take into consideration the nature, scale, extent and potential impact of any development proposal, and seek to ensure that:**
 - **Development proposals align where relevant with the West of England Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) and make a positive contribution to the delivery of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan, the Joint Local Transport Plan and other supporting and/or relevant plans and strategies, including neighbourhood plans; and**
 - **A strategic and integrated approach is taken to the location, planning, design, phasing and delivery of NSIPs and their associated infrastructure and/or development so that it maximises positive social, economic and environmental outcomes, minimises negative impacts, and secures appropriate community and legacy benefits, and**
 - **Development delivers design quality, including making a positive contribution to sustainability objectives, climate change resilience, and delivers biodiversity net gain.**
 - **In order to deliver effective mitigation and/or compensation measures must be commensurate with the scale and impact of the development.**
2. **In order to deliver on these objectives, to inform consultation responses and seek efficiency of working and common ground, the Council will:**
 - **Take a collaborative partnership approach on NSIPs, working with scheme promoters local communities and relevant Government agencies, statutory undertakers, public bodies non statutory organisations and other neighbouring local authorities in seeking to ensure that the socio economic, environmental and transport benefits and legacy of the project are maximised and negative impacts minimised and/or compensated for.**

³⁴ National Infrastructure Planning: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

- Take an approach to project engagement, assessment, negotiations and consultation responses that is proportionate to the nature, scale, complexity and implications of the project for South Gloucestershire and its communities.
 - Seek to agree the scope, methodologies and publication of all relevant socio economic, environmental and transport surveys and assessments that will underpin the development, assessment and subsequent monitoring of NSIP related proposals. Such assessments should be comprehensive and address the evolution of the project's impact over key phases of construction, operation, decommissioning and restoration. Evidence will be expected to demonstrate how alternatives have informed the development of proposals including for any on site options, as well as the siting and design of and mitigation for additional construction areas and associated development and infrastructure; and
 - Expect evidence to be provided to demonstrate that brownfield land and/or redundant facilities have been used where possible; and
 - How alternatives have informed the development of proposals including for any on site options, as well as the siting and design of and mitigation for additional construction areas and associated development and infrastructure; and
 - Seek to ensure that consideration is given to the full range of the proposed project's environmental, transport and socio economic impacts: positive and negative, tangible and intangible, and the level and duration of those impacts over time; and
 - Demonstration as to how these assessments have informed the development and delivery of the hierarchy of impact avoidance, mitigation and compensation proposals; and
 - In addition to topic by topic assessments, cumulative assessments will be required, including to understand the full range of effects on individual communities, through the preparation of Community Impact Assessments.
3. Phasing plans and triggers to secure the timely delivery of the various elements of the project, its supporting infrastructure and associated development will be necessary to ensure the control of impacts to acceptable levels, including, for example, and where relevant early or advance implementation of:
- Archaeological investigations and wildlife surveys to ensure that these inform site selection and site planning; and
 - Strategies for procurement, employment, education, training and recruitment, that take account of long lead in times; and
 - Transport infrastructure and worker accommodation proposals to avoid impacts on, for example, the road network, community facilities and the rented housing market; and
 - Habitat creation, landscape mitigation and/or screen planting where significant impacts are predicted.

4. **Appropriate monitoring arrangements and adequately resourced Management and Delivery Plans for both the Construction and Operational phases of NSIPs will be required to ensure that socio-economic, transport and environmental objectives are met during both construction and operation.**
5. **Given the scale, complexity and duration of larger NSIPs, mechanisms and contingencies to enable the modification of mitigation to address unanticipated project impacts.**
6. **Contributions to the Local Authority and/or other appropriate and agreed organisations to mitigate or where appropriate offset any adverse impacts, additional demands and/or harm caused by the project. Proposals should be developed through early and effective engagement including with affected local communities and the Council. The objective will be to identify measures, projects and services to mitigate impact while enhancing the long-term well-being and sustainability of the communities and environments affected. This could include the provision of new facilities or the upgrading of existing.**
7. **Local economic and community benefits should be maximised through agreement and early implementation of social, education, training, economic, environmental and transport strategies. In recognition of the burden and disturbance borne by the community in hosting some Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, the Council will where appropriate require packages of community benefits to be provided by the developer to offset and compensate the community for the burden imposed by hosting the project.**
 - **Once a DCO and its constituent development strategy, phasing and supporting infrastructure proposals have been consented, any NSIP related development proposals/ amendments or related applications will be assessed against the DCO and in combination with the overall development proposals. The objective will be to ensure that only those proposals with a positive balance of outcomes in terms of reducing negative effects or increased benefits are consented.**
 - **In order to have sufficient information to be able to assess the complex effects that can arise from NSIPs over the significant number of years of construction and operation, plans for monitoring of the effects of the project should be set out in the Environmental Statement. Clearly defined socio economic, environmental health and biophysical key performance indicators (KPIs) should be set out against which monitoring will be undertaken and reported.**
 - **There should be transparency of monitoring of progress against the DCO, its Requirements and the KPIs through the publication of a publicly accessible Annual Monitoring Report. The credibility of monitoring information should be ensured through provision for independent analysis and verification, as well as the establishment of theme specific monitoring and advisory groups involving relevant stakeholders.**

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Pre-application engagement on these complex projects can require significant levels of officer input over many months or years for more complex projects. If the Council is to effectively respond and successfully engage with developers on behalf of our communities in respect of major infrastructure proposals, this is likely to require significant resources beyond the capacity of the Council.

In order to address this, South Gloucestershire Council will encourage developers to enter into Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) and/or Service Level Agreements (SLA), appropriate to each project. Developers are encouraged to review South Gloucestershire Council's Planning Performance Agreement Charter for further information³⁵.

Should pre-application advice be required in advance of a PPA, the Council's approved pre-application charges for NSIPs as set out in the Council's Charging Schedule will apply.

Impact assessment and monitoring

Given the nature and scale of many NSIPs, it is likely that the full range of topics under the Environmental Impact Assessment regulations will need to be considered. However, where a NSIP is in an adjacent or nearby authority, effects may be less.

In order to minimise impact, and reduce the risk of unforeseen impacts, advance surveys and assessments of baseline conditions should inform site selection and planning work as well as detailed design. Impact assessment should also be an iterative process, conducted alongside the development of project proposals so that impact assessment informs both project planning and design.

Where NSIPs require a substantial number of construction workers, particular attention will need to be paid to potential impact, including on the housing market and the rental sector.

For larger projects, cumulative impact assessment is a particularly important consideration, including across within and across topic areas and in combination with other plans and projects. This should include consideration of the cumulative effects on impacts that are individually found not to be significant, so for example a series of biodiversity impacts that are found to be individually not significant, when considered together may cumulatively be found to be significant³⁶. A Community Impact Assessment will also be required in order to bring together and assess individual and cumulative impacts on existing communities and to inform the development and timely implementation of appropriate management and mitigation measures.

There has historically been an emphasis on assessing the impacts of major projects 'at peak', i.e. when there are predicted to be maximum numbers of e.g. traffic or workers for a relatively short period of time. However, if unforeseen changes in the project occur, such as a delay in the provision of supporting infrastructure, these peak numbers may be sustained over a longer period of time. It will be important therefore to assess the predicted impacts of the project over time, in order to determine either their acceptability or whether additional control measures and/or mitigation are required.

³⁵ South Gloucestershire Council Planning Performance Agreement Charter <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/pte090338.pdf>

³⁶ Hinkley C Connections Project Examining Authority Report to the Secretary of State https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/EN020001/EN020001-004121-151019_EN020001_HPCC_ExA_Report_to_SoS_Main_Report.pdf

For projects that will result in significant effects locally, appropriate governance arrangements will need to be put in place to monitor the progress of the project, involving relevant stakeholders, and data and findings published and reviewed at intervals appropriate to each KPI. In addition, in order for relevant stakeholders, including local communities, to be able to understand how a NSIP is performing over time against all KPIs and relevant measures secured in the DCO and accompanying documents, monitoring against KPI's should be published annually on a project monitoring web site and a paper copy deposited in a suitable local publicly accessible venue.

Mitigation and compensation

The scale and impact of NSIPs may require an appropriate and comprehensive package of developer contributions to mitigate and compensate for any new and increased levels of impact and harm. These contributions will be negotiated as part of the planning process, including through section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy where appropriate.

It is also accepted that due to the long timeframes, changing contexts and complexities of some NSIPs, aspects of impact prediction may be uncertain. It is therefore vital that where relevant, schemes of monitoring are put in place during construction and during operation to assess the reality of impacts arising. Mechanisms would also need to be put in place to allow the introduction of additional mitigation or the adjustment of approved measures, so that unanticipated consequences can be addressed.

In addition to contributions, the Council may also require packages of community benefits to be provided by the developer to offset and compensate the community for the burden imposed by hosting the project. Any such fund would be used to off-set the burden on the locality, and would identify potential legacy uses, including transport, social, economic, environmental and community infrastructure which would benefit the community in the long term. Community benefits beyond the requirements of the Planning Acts may also be sought through the provisions of the Local Government Acts, other legislation, through voluntary agreement with the project provider, or in accordance with an industry protocol.

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed policy approach?

Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Working Policy Title: Nuclear New Build

Existing Policies

Core Strategy Policy CS37 – Nuclear
Related Development (partial)
Policies Sites and Places Plan policy
PSP46: Oldbury New Nuclear Build (NNB)

PURPOSE:

To inform the Council's largely discretionary role in:

- Pre-application engagement on Oldbury New Nuclear Build power station
- Responding to informal and formal consultations
- Input to the Examination and any responses to the Secretary of State,

And fulfilling the Council's post consent role, including in determining:

- Planning applications for Oldbury New Nuclear Build power station, related development made to the Council
- Post consent applications for discharge of DCO requirements and planning conditions

And fulfilling the functions of enforcement authority.

This policy may also inform the assessment of proposals relating to the decommissioning of the existing power station, particularly in respect of identifying any potential for integration of proposed new build proposals.

National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-6 identifies an approximately 150 hectare (ha) site near Oldbury on Severn as being potentially suitable for the development of a nuclear new build power station (NNB) (see map below).

Map³⁷ showing: The nominated NNB site boundary (in blue)³⁸
The extent of the existing Magnox power station site (pink)



The nominated site is set in a sensitive location on the eastern bank of the internationally designated Severn Estuary, with tidal mudflats and the existing power station lagoon to the west, and the historic, flat, open landscape and habitats of the Severn Levels to the east. The site is adjacent to the existing Magnox power station that is now being decommissioned (referred to in this plan as Oldbury 'A'). Early discussions on large scale NNB proposals indicated that a further 150ha approximately will be required for construction purposes, plus additional off site associated infrastructure and development. However there are also other NNB technologies being developed including Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and nuclear fusion through the Government's Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP).

37 Source South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006 – 2027

38 Source National Policy Statement EN-6

As a NSIP, the primary policies against which an application will be determined are the overarching energy NPS EN-1, along with technology-specific energy policy for nuclear power generation and other relevant national policy such as the NPPF. Given the designations on the estuary the Habitats Regulations will also be relevant.

It is apparent from experience on other sites across the country that an Oldbury NNB project could be the largest and most complex development faced by local communities and the Council in generations. It is therefore considered important that a policy framework for a proposed NNB project at Oldbury should be developed in conjunction with the overall policy for South Gloucestershire, and that this policy should address ways of working as well as relevant considerations, constraints and opportunities relevant to the NNB.

While acknowledging that a proposed NNB power station at Oldbury has the potential to bring benefits to businesses, employment and the community, and make a significant contribution in terms of low carbon energy, there a number of fundamental concerns about potential negative effects. Both positive and negative effects are therefore addressed in the table of themes and issues, set out in the supporting text.

This policy should be read in combination with all other relevant policies in the Plan, but in particular the suite of policies relating to NSIPs, decommissioning and radioactive waste

POLICY WORDING:

The Council acknowledges the potential for NNB to deliver low carbon energy and high quality education, training, supply chain and employment opportunities and will work with a project promoter to maximise benefits and legacy for local communities and businesses. However, given the sensitive location, scale and complexity of the proposed NNB development and its potential for broad ranging negative impacts particularly on local communities, transport infrastructure and the environment, the Council will seek to ensure that:

- 1. The location, site planning, layout and design parameters for construction operations and all NNB related buildings, infrastructure, and mitigation measures avoids, minimises, mitigates or compensates for community, economic, and environmental impacts on the local and wider area, both in the short and longer term. This includes the integration where feasible of NNB with the decommissioning of the existing station, including the reuse of previously developed land, facilities and materials thereby reducing the extent of greenfield land needed for NNB and minimising the scale and extent of built form in the rural Levels and estuary landscape and seascape.**
- 2. Any advance or preparatory works are demonstrably necessary for the timely delivery of NNB at Oldbury, incorporate adequate and timely mitigation, and are accompanied by a strategy and mechanisms to secure appropriate restoration of the landscape should NNB at Oldbury not proceed.**
- 3. If a future or legacy use for any temporary development or construction area is not feasible or appropriate, the Council shall require a scheme of works to be agreed whereby:**
 - i. Temporary buildings, structures and other infrastructure are removed, and/or**
 - ii. Where appropriate serviced land is left in a condition suitable for a future agreed use; or**
 - iii. the land is restored to its original state.**

4. **An integrated suite of management, mitigation, restoration and delivery plans covering all areas of potential economic, social, community, transport and environmental impacts during construction and operation. These should include plans for phasing, and triggers for the delivery of key supporting infrastructure in order to secure the timely implementation of mitigation. Clearly defined and measurable Key Performance Indicators will be needed to assess progress and delivery over time.**
5. **Monitoring and review arrangements for both the construction and operational phases of the NNB. These should include governance arrangements, plans and mechanisms to cover the full range of impacts, to assess compliance with KPIs, the adequacy of mitigation, compensation or community benefits and to ensure that any necessary adjustments to mitigation can be agreed and made as necessary**
6. **Given the uncertainties that arise due to the scale complexity and duration of a NNB, a Community Impact Mitigation Fund will be necessary to address to address unforeseen changes in context and impacts that may arise over the lengthy construction and operational phases.**

The Council has identified ten themes and associated issues, constraints and opportunities relevant to:

- the development of sustainable and integrated proposals for a NNB development, and
- the minimisation of impacts on our local communities and environment, and
- the maximisation of positive outcomes, community benefits and legacy.

These provide a framework to inform early engagement between the Council and a promoter of NNB at Oldbury.

The Council would expect NNB related applications to comprise an integrated, navigable suite of documentation including well defined proposals and parameters defining the proposed development, and including clearly identified mitigation, monitoring and management plans demonstrating how all relevant matters identified in the table of Themes, Issues and Constraints have been taken into account and addressed.

7. **To support engagement throughout the planning and implementation stages for a proposed NNB, the Council will:**
 - **In advance of substantive pre-application engagement with the project promoter, prepare a Pre-Engagement Position Statement setting out the Council's initial views on evidence needed, constraints and opportunities in relation to the proposed development, as well as potential mitigation approaches, legacy opportunities and community benefits.**
 - **Work collaboratively with a project promoter to agree and ensure delivery of an appropriate evidence base to inform the development of sustainable NNB and associated development proposals as well as Council assessments , and**
 - **After consultation with a scheme promoter and other relevant parties and as appropriate to the scale of development proposed, prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide more detailed and/or site specific guidance to inform the Council's:**

- i. **pre-and post-application engagement and consultation responses;**
- ii. **role as consultee on the DCO and the preparation of a Local Impact Report;**
- iii. **determination of any planning applications for proposals related to the NNB proposal; and**
- iv. **determination of discharge of requirements and/or planning conditions, and the Council's role as enforcement authority.**
- v. **Given the length of time before decommissioning takes place, and the potential for changes in circumstance and socio economic and environmental circumstance, the Council will expect to see the preferred principles for decommissioning set out along with the firm plans for the construction and operational phases.**

* For the purposes of this Policy, and in recognition of the potential of NNB to have wide ranging effects, the Council considers the following are 'neighbouring or relevant local authorities' : Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Sedgemoor, Mendip, Stroud, Gloucestershire, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Monmouthshire, Gloucester City, Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

A NNB new facility would be expected to comprise very substantial development including nuclear reactors, cooling infrastructure, interim spent fuel, radioactive waste stores, other associated buildings plus grid connections, and additional construction land.

Associated development is likely to include a range of both permanent and temporary works and facilities such as:

- Flood defences for the site and the surrounding area;
- Transport infrastructure including road, sea, and potentially rail;
- Construction worker accommodation / facilities;
- Modifications to the electricity transmission infrastructure;
- Training facilities, a visitor/ reception centre and off-site emergency facilities;
- Extensive landscape, visual and biodiversity mitigation areas.

NNB development would also be subject to legislation relating to hazardous sites including a Detailed Emergency Planning Zone, within which the Emergency Planning implications of new development would need to be considered.

As a comparator that indicates the likely scale and complexity of large scale NNB, recent proposals for Wylfa Newydd on the Isle of Anglesey indicate:

- A nominated 236ha site, and a total site development/ construction area of 409ha
- Estimated 9 year construction period, and 60 years operation, 20 years decommissioning

- Design parameters for aspects of the development, with later details to be approved by the local authority
- A theoretical maximum of 9000 construction workers at peak
- 850 permanent jobs plus 1000 for periodic reactor maintenance
- On site accommodation for up to 4000 construction workers,
- Park and Ride for 1900 cars, and a logistics centre with capacity for up to 100 HGV
- Diversion of the coastal path inland around the NNB site
- Extensive on site landscaped areas plus off site ecological compensation areas
- Long term radioactive waste and spent fuel stores
- Site preparation and online highway improvement applications to the local authority

Small modular reactors are understood to occupy approximately 10% of the footprint of a large scale NNB.

As a result of the scale, complexity and duration of NNB development, a wide range of social, economic, transport and environmental effects are anticipated over a significant number of years, as set out in the following table:

Table of themes, issues, constraints and opportunities relevant to the development of NNB proposals at Oldbury on Severn and its' associated infrastructure and development

Notes:

- The following list is based on input from consultation, engagement and topic-based assessments of existing knowledge of the site and large scale NNB proposals at other sites.
- The order of themes, issues constraints and opportunities set out in the table below does not at this stage infer relative priority at this stage
- In order to ensure the sustainability of development proposals and appropriate impact assessments, themes, issues and schemes should be considered 'in the round' and cumulatively across the different topic areas set out below.

Theme	Issue/Constraint	Opportunities
Flood & Flood Risk Management (incl. Coastal change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flood zone 3 across the Levels ● EA requirements for levels of protection for NNB ● Potential for development to increase risk elsewhere ● Existing flood risk in local settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To address flood risk problems at Oldbury on Severn and the Levels ● Contribute to delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan
Transport including for example: construction materials, equipment, abnormal indivisible loads and workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unsuitability of much of the local road network for the volumes and scale of NNB vehicles ● The safety, amenity and access needs of local communities ● Congestion and capacity issues on the Strategic Road network, including motorway junctions ● The environmental sensitivity of the locality ● Emergency access requirements in times of flood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utilise non-road transport solutions including sea and rail ● The use of temporary transport infrastructure ● Capturing worker movements where they will result in least impact on the road network ● Maximising use of public transport, cycling and walking ● Separation, control and enforcement of necessary NNB road traffic and parking from the local road network ● Addressing congestion on the strategic road network increase capacity at local motorway junctions ● Contribute to delivery of JLTP, through legacy transport links and Park and Ride/ Park and Share facilities

Theme	Issue/Constraint	Opportunities
<p>Construction worker accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For operational reasons construction workers may need to be accommodated on site ● Location of NNB site in Flood Zone 3 (see above) ● Significant proportion of workers may seek functional low-cost accommodation ● Potential commuting zone – up to 90 minutes ● Pressure on local private rented sector ● Limited tourist accommodation in South Glos. ● Ensuring local communities are not unbalanced or overwhelmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workforce surveys during construction could enable mitigation adjustments if needed ● Contributing legacy in terms of: ● Serviced sites or housing in line with the Local Plan and Housing Market Assessment ● Amenity or recreational facilities for community use
<p>Environment (archaeology & historic environment, landscape & visual, ecology)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large scale NNB construction in environmentally sensitive Severn Levels and Estuary ● International, national and local biodiversity and heritage designations and assets ● A currently tranquil landscape with dark skies ● Requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment ● Delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain ● Historic Levels landscape with high archaeological potential ● Extensive PRoW network including the Severn Way ● Even with rigorous approaches to impact avoidance / mitigation, significant residual impacts are likely ● Advance archaeological, biodiversity and visual assessments to inform site selection and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise the use of brown field land at the existing power station to minimise both use of green fields and visual impact ● Advance landscape and biodiversity works to minimise NNB construction impacts ● Off-site compensatory habitat creation and planting to contribute to biodiversity networks and mitigate visual impact ● Phasing to restore land and habitat as soon as it is no longer needed for construction purposes

Theme	Issue/Constraint	Opportunities
Climate Change & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Although nuclear power generation is low carbon, construction methods vary in sustainability ● Need to ensure climate change resilience (see also Flooding theme above) ● Adjacent nuclear decommissioning and NNB sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for integrated solutions between the Magnox and NNB including to the temporary and/ or long term reuse of brownfield land and flood mitigation ● Maximise sustainable transport and construction methods ● Integrate Sustainable Drainage solutions into NNB site design ● Facilitate the use of waste heat from NNB for e.g. agriculture, industrial, business and/or residential use.
Economic Development (also links to Education, training and skills below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Covid-19 has resulted in economic uncertainty ● NNB should benefit host community both residents and businesses ● Potential for impact on local businesses due to displacement of staff and skills ● Long NNB lead in times increase risk of changed local economic conditions ● Potential for boom and bust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set local targets and encourage, enable and support local supply chain to engage with NNB procurement ● Raise aspirations and offer training and upskilling opportunities for local people to help meet NNB needs ● Contribute to delivery of West of England Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Plan ● Surveys during implementation to understand the wider effects of NNB including on local businesses and inform any necessary adjustment to mitigation

Theme	Issue/Constraint	Opportunities
Education, Training & Skills (also links to Economic Development above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NNB need for STEM related and support skills ● Potential for leakage of skills from local businesses ● Historic pattern of underachievement in secondary level education for South Gloucestershire ● NNB demand for education, training and skills likely to be beyond current capacity and offer of local colleges ● Capacity of existing nurseries, pre-schools and schools to meet needs of incoming NNB families ● Long lead in times for education to deliver on NNB needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Early investment in local colleges to delivery high quality local skills and training opportunities for local people ● Initiatives to raise aspirations and attainment in local schools ● Active and wide promotion of STEM subjects from young age ● Contribute to delivery of South Gloucestershire's Joint Health and Well-being Strategy
Community health and safety, community benefit and quality of life (including environmental health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Close proximity of dwellings to the NNB site ● Local people have ready PRoW access to the countryside and along the estuary ● The existing environment around the NNB site is rural, tranquil and peaceful ● By its very nature NNB development will have wide ranging effects on local people ● An influx of construction workers could place pressures on local infrastructure and services and result in concerns about community safety ● There is a need to understand effects on the well-being of communities during implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotion of healthy lifestyles and well-being both for construction workers and local people ● Dedicated provision of facilities and services for construction workers to prevent impacts on local communities ● Surveys of local people during implementation can help understanding of well-being issues ● Provision of amenities for construction workers could become long term legacy for local communities ● Enhancements to the PRoW network to compensate for any unavoidable losses.

Theme	Issue/Constraint	Opportunities
<p>Emergency Planning³⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ONR regulations covering arrangements for the surrounding area ● Potential public perceptions regarding safety ● Relationship to Emergency Planning arrangements for the existing Magnox station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pro-actively address issues of public concern both actual and perceived. ● Ensure dovetailing of arrangements between the Magnox and NNB sites. ● Consider NNB Emergency Planning in the context of development proposals for the surrounding area.
<p>Flexibilities, monitoring and management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Due to the timeframes for NNB projects, there is the potential for changes in the socio economic or environmental context of the project ● Since detailed design of NNB facilities continues after DCO consent, it is likely that design parameters will be set to future proof plans ● The precautionary approach to impact appraisal ensures that worst case scenarios are assessed, ● However, the duration of impact is also relevant to acceptability ● Due to the complexity of NNB development it is possible that unanticipated impacts may occur during construction and/or operation. ● Public concerns about NNB may arise during the planning process and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The timely delivery of impact mitigation and infrastructure can be secured through phasing plans and triggers ● Contingency Funding enables mitigation of unanticipated effects ● Public confidence can be built by publishing regularly updated monitoring information on a public web site. ● A Community Impact Mitigation Fund can facilitate offsetting of unavoidable impacts that cannot be mitigated ● Community Benefits are a way of recognising the burden and disturbance of a development of the complexity, scale and duration of NNB that is borne by the host community

³⁹ The Office of Nuclear Regulation land use planning advice in respect of emergency planning around nuclear sites including Oldbury may be found at: <http://www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm>

Key to maximising benefits and minimising impacts across a range of topic areas relevant to NNB will be the early agreement and potentially the advance and/or early delivery of a range of strategies and mitigation measures, defined triggers for implementation, along with systematic and clearly defined monitoring to ensure effectiveness and identify any need for adjustments. For example, given the need to raise awareness of business opportunities to ensure that local companies can meet the requirements of the nuclear industry; as well as the need to ensure the availability of suitably qualified workforce both for construction and operation, early engagement in the pre-application phase will be required in respect of education, training, skills and supply chain strategies. Similarly for biodiversity, where alternative habitats may be required to accommodate displaced species, and for archaeology where advance agreement and implementation of Written Schemes of Investigation, early agreement and implementation of strategies may be required. Where visual screening is required for construction operations, advance planting schemes may be required. In order to avoid impacts on social, health and community services and facilities serving existing communities, early delivery may be needed. Transport infrastructure may need to be delivered early in the NNB implementation phase, in order to avoid unacceptable impacts on existing infrastructure.

The site would fall within the requirements of the Radiation Emergency Preparedness & Public Information Regulations (REPPPIR) 2019 and would require off site arrangements to be put in place in the event of a release of radiation.⁴⁰

Whilst this table sets out a range of issues known at this time, with such long construction and operational phases, it is recognised that there may be changes in the wider and/or local socio economic and environmental context of a NNB project, and also that aspects of the project design may evolve. Mechanisms therefore need to be put in place to accommodate flexibilities while also ensuring that mitigation measures can be adapted or modified to address any impacts arising from those changes. The establishment of agreed design parameters, and well defined, effective and long term monitoring arrangements, mechanisms and KPIs are key to this.

Given the proximity of 'Oldbury A' and the proposed NNB site, and the potential for close interrelationships between multiple factors, the Council will continue to work with the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency, the operators of Oldbury 'A' and NNB promoters in respect of decommissioning plans and the potential for integration with NNB. These discussions will contribute to the Council's preparation of a pre-engagement position statement or SPD for NNB, as set out above. Early discussions have also contributed to the development of a new planning policy relating to decommissioning.

To facilitate effective and timely pre-application engagement with the developer, the Council, in conjunction with relevant parties, will produce the following documents:

⁴⁰ Note: Regulations are continuously reviewed and the status of the site may change in future

① A Pre-engagement Position Statement

This will consider the experience of other NNB projects in the particular context of Oldbury. It will address the issues set out in the table above, providing where appropriate the Council's initial views on constraints and where possible potential planning, design, mitigation, legacy and community benefit opportunities that align with wider strategies, objectives and policies for the Council area.

It will be informed by early duty to co-operate engagement including with neighbouring Councils, advice from statutory bodies, and engagement with the project promoter. By providing an early view on potential constraints and opportunities, this will inform the preparation of an evidence base to underpin the preparation of an SPD, the development of positive and sustainable development proposals for the NNB and its associated development.

② A SPD for Oldbury NNB

The SPD may be adopted in advance of formal pre-application consultation by the project promoter, to:

help inform the scheme development;

provide a basis for the Council's assessment of the project proposals and associated delivery plans; and

provide the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State with guidance which may be 'material' to decision making.

Although the principles of decommissioning will be agreed at the project planning stages, due to the long timescales involved, flexibility will be required in how these are met. Relevant aspects of proposed policy on decommissioning will be expected to inform the establishment of those principles.

Questions

Do you agree with our proposed policy approach?

Do you think there are any other issues we should consider in this policy?

To answer these questions visit our online consultation page at www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020-feedback to complete or download our questionnaire.

Working Policy Title:

Oldbury A Station – Decommissioning

Existing Policies

Core Strategy Policy CS37 – Nuclear Related Development (partial)
Policies Sites and Places Plan policy
PSP46: Oldbury New Nuclear Build (NNB)

PURPOSE:

Along with other relevant policies in the plan, this policy will be a material consideration in engaging with the site licensee, NDA and the NNB promoter, other potential developers and providing pre-application advice, assessing and determining individual planning applications, as well as responding to other notifications and consultations related to the decommissioning of Oldbury power station.

This policy will support decommissioning of the existing station in a way that considers both interim and end states, including:

- Recognising the:
 - Potential for beneficial temporary / interim and or long term uses including integration with NNB, green energy uses
 - Benefits of significant quality employment opportunities provided by the site over many years and promotion of this into the future
 - Existence of Grid connection infrastructure
 - Environmental sensitivity of the locality
 - The presence of priority habitat and the declining biodiversity value of lagoon 3 on site, and
 - Constraints of road access and flood risk
- delivering sustainable outcomes in environmental, socio economic and transport terms, and net gain for biodiversity, as well as
- minimising impact and maximising benefits and legacy throughout the life of this intergenerational project.

The existing nuclear power station at Oldbury ceased generation in 2012, and is now being decommissioned. The Magnox site is located in a rural, sensitive and visually prominent location on the banks of the internationally designated Severn Estuary, in an area of high archaeological potential and immediately adjacent to the nominated nuclear new build (NNB). The site includes Lagoon 3, which formerly provided open water habitat for birds associated with the estuary designations. Although the 1992 planning permission for Lagoon 3 required restoration to its former or an improved condition following cessation of its use, the biodiversity value of this feature is declining as the water area reduces due to scrubbing over.

Magnox is undertaking an ongoing programme of decommissioning. It is expected that decommissioning plans and interim and final end state proposals will evolve over time, and will continue through and beyond the Local Plan period. The NDA expectation is that land will be remediated and de-designated by 2103.

Decommissioning involves activities such as the removal and temporary storage and/or disposal of hazardous waste such as asbestos and radioactive waste, the rationalisation of buildings and reuse of land for activities relating to decommissioning, and the demolition of those that are no longer needed. In the longer term land that will be needed for long term site clearance related activity, but in the interim may potentially become available for beneficial temporary uses. The treatment and temporary storage of radioactive waste, both arising from Oldbury but also as part of an integrated programme of decommissioning for the national fleet of nuclear legacy power station sites because Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) has been imported to Oldbury for processing before onward transport to the long term storage facility at Berkley. Proposed policy on Radioactive Waste will be relevant in the consideration of decommissioning proposals.

Given the Council's role as a Local Planning Authority (LPA), pre-application enquiries, demolition notifications and planning applications relating to the decommissioning process are expected to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) during and beyond the Local Plan period. As part of these, we will want to understand how individual proposals will relate to the wider decommissioning plans and uses, any proposals for new build, and explore potential opportunities for beneficial interim reuse and/ or the restoration of land, prior to the site reaching its long term and final end state.

Given the importance of decommissioning, it is recognised that priority should be given to uses that facilitate the decommissioning of the existing station. However, the Council considers that, in order to minimise impact of nuclear new build NNB on the locality it will be important where possible and practical to re-use the existing power station facilities and/ or brownfield land and materials

In terms informing of the LPA's role, other emerging Local Plan 2020 policies sets out an overarching framework for the decommissioning and restoration of the Oldbury site against which pre-application advice and planning consents will be considered, and will also help inform the Council's response to any consultations on consents, licenses or permits from other organisations. Other policies which may also be relevant, including proposed policies on radioactive waste, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and associated or related development and proposed policy on Oldbury Nuclear New Build.

POLICY WORDING:

The Council will work in collaboration with the NDA, relevant statutory organisations, the operators of the existing Power Station site and the promoters of nuclear new build, to agree a co-ordinated, and integrated and phased site wide strategic masterplan to delivers sustainable decommissioning proposals and beneficial use, reuse and restoration proposals as appropriate, while recognising the context of regulatory, strategy and guidance applying to nuclear decommissioning proposals.

All land use, development, demolition and waste planning proposals should be set within the context of an agreed strategic masterplan. The masterplan will provide a clear and consistent framework, to ensure that each application can be considered in the context of delivering on the overarching proposals for the Oldbury site. Given the long term nature of decommissioning, spanning many years and even generations, it is acknowledged that plans for the site will evolve over time, and the masterplan will therefore need address both interim and end states and be capable of review and revision.

Given the importance of decommissioning the existing station, and the potential benefits of reusing the brownfield land to reduce the overall impact of NNB, when considering land use proposals at the existing Oldbury power station site, priority will sequentially be given to meeting the needs of:

- Decommissioning;
- Nuclear new build proposals;
- Other employment and/or green energy related uses.

Application of these priorities is subject to compliance with the criteria set out below and other relevant policy in the development plan.

The masterplan, including any necessary revisions, and individual proposals should seek to minimise impact on and maximise benefits and positive legacy for communities, the economy and the environment, including by:

- Securing sustainable and beneficial use and/or reuse and restoration of the site in terms of both interim and end states; and
- Protecting the site for high quality employment uses and/or green energy related uses in both in the near and longer term, while also:
- Ensuring that both the proposed works and their timing avoids impact on biodiversity designations and protected species, and where possible restoring, enhancing and managing Priority Habitats;
- Reinstating the habitat value of lagoon 3 for bird species associated with the designations on the Severn Estuary
- Conserving and where appropriate enhancing landscape character and visual amenity of the site and the locality including views across the local and wider landscape and estuary;
- Undertaking detailed archaeological and geoarchaeological assessment and investigation, recording and publication where development may impact on buried archaeological and environmental remains;

- **Protecting the routes and amenity of the Severn Way and other PRoW links;**
- **Ensuring that any associated transport proposals are effectively controlled to avoid impact on local communities and ensure the safety of other road users;**
- **Demonstrating resilience to climate change and any increase in flood risk.**

The emerging policy on radioactive waste is also of particular relevance to the development of a masterplan for decommissioning.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Due to the evolving and emerging position in relation to decommissioning and radioactive waste management and disposal, and the likely duration of the decommissioning process, it is envisaged that a strategic masterplan for the site would need to be an iterative document that is reviewed and revised in response to changes in the national policy, context, practice and permissions. This masterplan should set the overall strategy for the site, and provide the context for more detailed development proposals. It should set out the overall parameters for the future evolution of the site, including:

- a. The existing, interim and end states for the site,;
- b. An outline phasing and timetable for works
- c. The location and scale of existing and proposed structures, buildings, voids, boundary treatments and any proposals for their retention or modification,
- d. Demolition proposals both above and below ground;
- e. Proposals for new or changed earthworks, hardstanding or changes to land use and /or external appearance, including restoration where buildings are removed;
- f. Any locations, proposals and protection measures for onsite waste treatment, management and/or disposal of all types;
- g. The design approaches for new and altered buildings, structures and open areas,
- h. Strategic landscape and biodiversity proposals, including the management and or restoration of the mosaic of semi-natural and Priority Habitats for the benefit of protected Species across the Magnox estate, including the reinstatement of Lagoon 3 as open water for birds' species associated with the estuary.

The masterplan proposals will also need to address the sensitivity of the site and its' surrounding environment, including but not limited to, consideration of the effects on:

- The international and national designations on the estuary, including avoiding disturbance to protected wildlife both on the estuary and the levels, reversing biodiversity decline at Lagoon 3 and delivering net gain;
- The high archaeological potential of the Severn Levels and the potential for surface or sub surface features and finds.
- The open character of the surrounding Levels Landscape

- Flood risk
- The capacity of the road network, effects on residential settlement and the safety of other road users
- protecting the amenity of local communities, including along transport routes;
- ensuring flood and climate change resilience as well as the protection of air and water quality, and
- the distinctive rural character of the surrounding landscape and the public rights of way network, including the Severn Way, for interim states as well as end state.
- The existing reactor buildings, with their distinctive blue and white stripes that form a distinctive feature of the local landscape and are locally listed. The visual implications of any proposals for change would need to be carefully considered.

Given the location of the existing power station on the edge of the Severn Estuary and surrounded by low-lying Levels, and the timeframes involved with decommissioning, resilience to flood and climate change will be important considerations for both decommissioning and planning relating to radioactive waste. The need to protect habitats and species associated with the international designations on the estuary, including the seasonal presence of migratory species, may also constrain the timing, phasing and nature of decommissioning related activities and works.

An explanation as to how any necessary Environmental Impact Assessment requirements will be met and Habitats Regulations compliance achieved, should accompany the strategic masterplan and individual proposals for the site. These should consider not only the individual effects of the proposals, but also any cumulative effects.

Given the timeframe for decommissioning, it will be important that the masterplan is an evolving document, and that phasing and review mechanisms for all relevant socio-economic and environmental considerations are built in.

In line with the emerging Local Plan 2020 policy on NSIPs Council engagement in the preparation of a strategic masterplan on decommissioning should be appropriately resourced via a Planning Performance Agreement or other suitable mechanism.

Questions

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Working Policy Title: Radioactive Waste

Existing Policies

Core Strategy policy CS37 Nuclear related Development (covers the overall approach to nuclear related development, including paragraph 12 on radioactive waste).

PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to be read in combination in particular with the emerging Local Plan 2020, policy on decommissioning, although it may also be relevant to any future proposals for disposing of radioactive waste off site, and the development of preferred principles for the decommissioning of a new nuclear power station.

- Support decommissioning of the existing station, and appropriate beneficial interim/end state uses
- Take into account the intergenerational nature of the project, and experience to date that changes in approach to decommissioning may evolve over time
- Seek to ensure that an integrated approach is taken both to the overall land use planning of the site and individual project proposals within that overall framework, as well as, where possible in respect of nuclear new build
- Seek to secure a beneficial balance of socio economic and environmental outcomes from all proposals including any proposal to dispose of low level or very low level waste on site

Along with other relevant policies in the plan, this policy will be a material consideration in assessing individual planning and waste applications, notifications and any consultations related to the decommissioning of Oldbury power station.

The interim storage of radioactive waste and spent fuel on site forms an integral part of the operation and decommissioning of any nuclear power station and associated facilities. The strategies for dealing with the different levels of waste vary according to their radioactivity characteristics, with higher activity wastes such as nuclear fuel having already been removed off site, intermediate level wastes being treated and packaged at Oldbury prior to being moved to Berkeley for long term storage until such time as a national geological disposal facility is available.

Current Environment Agency (EA) guidance⁴¹ includes for the potential disposal of some Low or Very Low Level Waste (LLW and VLLW) on site, instead of transporting off site for disposal elsewhere. In line with this guidance, site operators are required to produce a Waste Management Plan, a Site Wide Environmental Safety Case, and strategies to keep the risk of radiation exposure to people as low as reasonably achievable, taking into account economic and social factors.

Magnox applies the Waste Hierarchy⁴², Best Available Technique (BAT) and Best Environment Practice (BEP) to manage the waste from its nuclear liabilities. This includes pre-treatment, conditioning and decay storage processes prior to disposal to reduce the hazardous activity and volume of LLW and higher activity waste (HAW) in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy. This means that where radioactive waste generation cannot be avoided or minimised at source, it will be disposed of in accordance with the relevant national policy and strategies. The regulation and permitting of radioactive waste is the responsibility of the Office For Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency. The following policy therefore addresses only the planning aspects of radioactive waste proposals.

In respect of radioactive waste that may arise from a potential future NNB, National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-6 makes clear that each nuclear power station will have its own Intermediate Level Waste store on site until a national disposal facility becomes available. Therefore, proposals for the management and storage of radioactive waste would form part of any application for the project. However, given the timeframes involved, such wastes would not be expected to arise until well beyond the current Local Plan period. In combination with other policies in the Local Plan 2020, the policy below may however inform the Councils review and assessment of the preferred principles for decommissioning that are expected to form part of any DCO application for NNB.

POLICY WORDING:

Proposals for the management or storage of radioactive waste, or the disposal of low level and or very low level waste at the Oldbury licensed site, will only be permitted where they are strongly justified and it is demonstrated that all of the following criteria are met:

- a. **Waste is managed at the highest practicable level of the waste hierarchy; and**
- b. **Regard has been given to the proximity principle, and the need to minimise impacts on communities along transport routes from the site, and**
- c. **The environmental, social and economic impacts are acceptable and the benefits outweigh any negative effects; and**
- d. **Mechanisms are put in place to ensure appropriate records are kept and knowledge of the location, extent and nature of material remaining on site is available to plan makers, regulators, owners of the land and decision makers into the future, and**
- e. **The site will be controlled and regulated appropriately to ensure public health and environmental safety; and**

⁴¹ Environment Agency Guidance: Decommissioning of nuclear sites and release from regulation July 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decommissioning-of-nuclear-sites-and-release-from-regulation/decommissioning-of-nuclear-sites-and-release-from-regulation#guidance-for-nuclear-operators>

⁴² NDA Radioactive Waste Strategy Figure 2 explains the Waste Hierarchy: preferred approach is prevention, then minimisation, then reuse*, then recycle and disposal only when necessary. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/nda-radioactive-waste-management-strategy> EA guidance as per footnote 2 sets out examples of reuse, including filling voids on site or forming bunds/landscaping <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decommissioning-of-nuclear-sites-and-release-from-regulation>

- f. **Measures are in place to mitigate risks from flood and climate change; and**
- g. **Issues such as perceived risk are fully addressed and explained, and**
- h. **Appropriate Community Benefits are secured to offset the intergenerational delay in the release and restoration of part of the Oldbury site, and to counter-balance any perceived impacts and negative perceptions from the presence of LLW on the site.**

Where it is proposed that capacity is provided for the management of waste from other sites, it can be demonstrated it is strongly justified that the facility will meet a need that is not met elsewhere that better accords with the proximity principle, and accords with the above criteria.

This policy will be applied in consideration of both on and off-site issues, including impacts arising as a result of the transport of radioactive waste off site.

Proposals for waste management or disposal should form an integral part of the strategic decommissioning masterplan for the Oldbury site, in accordance with emerging Local Plan 2020 policy. The principles of radioactive waste management should also form an integral part of NNB DCO proposals.

SUPPORTING TEXT:

This policy will be applied in conjunction with other relevant policies in this plan, in particular policies on NSIPs, new nuclear development and decommissioning. Since the disposal of radioactive waste on site is likely to constrain future land uses and activities and result in the need for security/regulation, waste management or disposal proposals should form an integral part of master planning for decommissioning of the site at Oldbury.

This may also be relevant to informing the Council's planning response to any consultations on consents, licenses or permits from other organisations, as well as in determining planning applications to South Gloucestershire Council.

Any proposal to dispose of such waste on site will require planning consent as well as consent from the Environment Agency. The management and/or disposal of wastes on site will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that public and environmental safety is adequately and appropriately secured into the future through licensing, regulation and permitting from the relevant statutory body.

In considering proposals relating to radioactive waste the Council will have regard to other relevant guidance and policy including for example on the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle⁴³, a masterplan for decommissioning the Oldbury site, as well as assessments of the potential impact in the wider community and environment, including those arising from alternative disposal routes. Given the proximity to the estuary, due consideration must also be given to impacts on designations and protected species, including in relation to the timing of works and any potential for disturbance.

⁴³ Planning Portal definition of Proximity Principle: Waste should be managed as near as possible to its place of production, reducing travel impacts. https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/452/proximity_principle/category/7/glossary_of_planning_terms

Given the intergenerational timeframes involved with decommissioning, the long timeframes involved in radioactive decay, and any potential hazards associated with low and very low level radioactive materials proposed to be disposed of on site, it will be vital to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to ensure that records are available and signposted to future organisations, land owners, decision makers and regulators, and to inform land use planning into the future.

Nuclear power stations are national infrastructure sites, hosted by local communities on behalf of the nation. Unlike for example domestic waste streams, radioactive waste from a nuclear power station is not generated by that local community, it is generated by that national infrastructure facility and any on site disposal would again be hosted by that local community on behalf of the nation. Given the perceptions relating to radioactive waste, security requirements and limitations on future use that would be imposed by disposal of low level and very low level waste on site at Oldbury, that would endure for many generations into the future, but without any benefits of employment opportunities on the site, it is appropriate that Community Benefits are secured to offset these impacts. An appropriately governed Community Fund should be established to provide positive financial support for projects that improve the amenity, accessibility and social infrastructure of the Oldbury site environs.

It should be noted that the decommissioning of Oldbury will also potentially result in other hazardous wastes such as asbestos which will require disposal at a hazardous landfill site. In addition significant volumes of conventional waste such as concrete and hardstanding may also arise from the demolition and clearance of buildings and hardstandings. Suitable disposal options will also need to be appropriately regulated and controlled and comply with other relevant plans, such as the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy.

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