Dear Sir / Madam

Re: The Joint Spatial Plan: Towards the Emerging Spatial Strategy

Boyer is instructed by the owners of land to the east of Failand, as shown on the site promotion plan attached at Appendix 1, to submit representations in response to the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP): ‘Towards the Emerging Spatial Strategy’, November 2016. We also attach a completed Site Submission Form as part of our representations.

The Scale of Housing Need

1.1 The current JSP consultation document is intended to identify the number of new market and affordable homes, alongside employment that will be needed across the Joint Plan area over the period 2016-2036. To deliver the housing and employment needs the JSP sets out what it considers to be the most appropriate spatial strategy.

1.2 The Spatial Strategy is the policy mechanism through which the identified need for housing, employment and infrastructure is delivered across the Plan period to 2036. Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that in order to achieve the national agenda of boosting significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should ensure that their Local Plan meets the full Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for market and affordable housing in the HMA.

1.3 Paragraph 159 of the NPPF confirms that local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area and to achieve this, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) should be prepared in order to assess their full housing needs. The JSP area comprises the ‘Wider Bristol Housing Market Area’ and the ‘Bath Housing Market Area’ and is the basis upon which the latest version of the SHMA has been prepared.
1.4 The current JSP consultation document concludes that the OAN is estimated to be 97,800, this figure is increased to provide an allowance of 4,400 for additional older person housing, increasing the OAN to 102,200. Recognising that the preparation of the SHMA is an ongoing process, it is also proposed to include a buffer of 2% in order to allow for any changes in the SHMA prior to the final adoption of the JSP.

1.5 As a result, the proposed housing requirement remains a work in progress but the current position of the JSP authorities is that 105,000 net additional new homes are required between 2016 and 2036. Taking into account committed / planned supply from the four individual planning authorities and their respective Core Strategies/Local Plans, paragraph 23 of the JSP consultation document concludes that “there are up to 39,000 additional dwellings to 2036, that need to be planned through the JSP spatial strategy”. Table 1 (Strategic Development Locations) applies a distribution based on this requirement to provide 39,000 net additional dwellings.

1.6 The proposed spatial distribution strategy is not supported as it is not considered to be premised on an accurate understanding of the true OAN for the JSP area. As a result, the wider spatial options for the distribution of new development are not considered to provide an effective or justified strategy.

1.7 Our representations have not sought to replicate the work of others in terms of identifying the true OAN. To do so would add little to the debate as it is considered that representations submitted previously demonstrate clearly the concerns regarding the scale of growth proposed to be addressed through the JSP. The ‘West of England – Housing and Economic Review’ (January 2016) prepared by Barton Willmore concluded that the full OAN for the JSP Area is 153,440 dwellings (7,672dpa) for the period 2016-2036. Separate submissions by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) identify an OAN within the range of 131,551 and 144,928 dwellings over the Plan period. Both assessments submitted in response to the JSP Issues and Options consultation (November 2015) are based on industry standard modelling techniques and form a reliable and robust alternative assessment of the OAN for the JSP.

1.8 It is outside the scope of our representations to endorse the assessment of others who have made representations to the JSP, but the alternative assessments demonstrate the concerns regarding the validity of the OAN proposed in the current JSP consultation document. The alternative OAN figures represent an increase of between 25% and 46% when compared with 105,000 proposed in the JSP. This translates to a difference of between 26,551 and 48,440 homes over the JSP period to 2036.

1.9 Such significant disparities in the OAN figure raise fundamental concerns as to the robustness of the scale of growth proposed in the JSP. In turn, this brings in to question the validity of the proposed spatial strategy as it is based on the objective of delivering a scale of growth that is significantly at odds with alternative assessments of need over the Plan period.

1.10 This also has serious implications for the scale of additional growth and sites required to address the outstanding requirement from that planned for in existing Plans and the balance that will need to be provided for up to 2036.
Delivery of Affordable Housing

1.11 Furthermore, the 105,000 OAN figure will result in a significant shortfall in terms of the planned delivery of affordable housing compared with the JSP’s evidence on affordable housing need. Paragraph 24 of the JSP consultation document states that affordable housing need equates to an additional 32,000 affordable homes, equivalent to 30% of the planned housing provision over the JSP Plan period. To achieve this it will require an annual delivery rate of 1,610 affordable homes per year, which compares with actual delivery rates of affordable homes over the period 2006/07 to 2014/15 of 898 per year.

1.12 It is recognised that it is not always practicable or achievable to plan to address affordable housing need in full. However, the JSP rejects the option of increasing the overall housing market housing figure as a way of bringing forward more affordable homes. This does not represent a positive approach to plan-making and the rejection of any increase in the overall housing requirement is premised specifically on the assumption that it will result in an oversupply of market homes creating an imbalance between the number of jobs and homes. However, this conclusion is premised on the assumption that the OAN identified in the JSP consultation document is sound, and we have highlighted previously the disparities between the JSP assessment and that of those presented by others using industry standard modelling techniques. Furthermore, the 105,000 dwellings is based on economic growth forecasts which are less than the Local Enterprise Partnership forecasts.

1.13 The concern is that the JSP is not only adopting a policy of resistance in terms of going as far as possible in respect of affordable housing delivery, but that it is also actively promoting a housing strategy based on an OAN that is significantly at odds with alternative and credible assessments of need prepared by the development industry. In this context the JSP can neither be considered to be positively prepared, justified and moreover, effective, in terms of delivering the objectives of addressing housing need over the Plan Period. To underestimate the OAN will have serious implications for the JSP area, including:

- Compounding the existing backlog of housing need.
- Exacerbating the affordability crises in the housing market.
- Constrain economic growth and jeopardise the delivery of wider economic objectives of the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Result in less sustainable development as in-commuting continues due to the lack of adequate provision within the JSP area.

1.14 It is a Core Planning Principle as set out at Paragraph 17 of the NPPF (3rd bullet point) that every effort should be made to objectively identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. The current approach proposed by the JSP, which actively plans to fail to address affordable housing need and is based on an OAN which is significantly lower than alternative assessments, is not considered to be justified as the process of considering wider opportunities for growth as part of the strategy for addressing the need for housing has not be based on a detailed consideration of reasonable alternatives.
1.15 Different levels of growth, for both market and affordable housing, will generate different combinations of spatial options. An alternative housing requirement is likely to require a contribution from all spatial options previously identified in the JSP Issues and Options consultation (2015).

1.16 The Spatial Strategy for the JSP must first and foremost be based on an accurate and realistic assessment of housing need throughout the JSP area. Notwithstanding our concerns regarding the soundness of the JSP identified OAN, we are concerned that the proposed Spatial Strategy is not justified, nor will be effective in terms of delivering the final growth requirements of the JSP.

Prioritisation of Brownfield Land

1.17 We are concerned that there is an overriding focus on the "prioritisation" of brownfield land which in turn dictates the wider spatial strategy in terms of both the scale and wider distribution of growth across the JSP area. The reliance upon urban sites has increased from 10,000 dwellings in the Issues and Options document to the now suggested capacity of 14,300 dwellings across the Plan Area. This, in turn, is used as a justification to reduce the scale of development that is required from alternative sources, i.e. Greenfield site development, including Green Belt.

1.18 The reliance on brownfield sites has therefore increased significantly over the course of the preparation of the JSP and has, in our opinion, acted as a constraint on the objective consideration of other alternatives including greenfield and Green Belt opportunities. Notwithstanding our position that the JSP is not planning to meet the full OAN, the prioritisation of brownfield land represents an extremely high risk strategy given the acknowledged uncertainty as to the availability and deliverability of such sites. At present, we consider that the JSP does not provide sound evidence as to the certainty of supply from brownfield sites.

1.19 Further, an effective spatial strategy will require a broad range of sites in a number of locations including strategic urban extensions to Bristol but also appropriate scales of growth at smaller settlements where such development would enhance their sustainability. The concern is that the JSP, based on the current OAN, only includes an allowance for 'non-strategic' growth in villages and towns across the JSP area of just 3,400, homes, of which 1,000 is directed towards North Somerset. We do not consider that this is a sufficient scale of provision that would support rural communities, and other more sustainably-located smaller settlements, which are outside the main urban centres.

1.20 The approach taken in respect of North Somerset is also inconsistent. We note that the appropriateness of development at settlements within the Green Belt is positively acknowledged elsewhere in the JSP area including within South Gloucestershire (Yate/Chipping Sodbury and Coalpit Heath) and Bath and North East Somerset (Keynsham and Whitchurch).

1.21 Given the above, the prioritisation of brownfield land, alongside the under-estimation of the OAN puts in place an unjustified and unnecessary constraint on the extent to which land located within the Green Belt will be required to satisfy the growth requirements of the JSP.
The NPPF (Paragraph 85) is clear that when defining the boundaries of the Green Belt local planning authorities should “ensure consistency with the Local Plan Strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development”. At present there are serious concerns that the scale of the OAN identified in the JSP does not accurately represent the true extent of the need for new homes arising across the JSP area.
The Role of the Green Belt

1.22 The uncertainty surrounding the true OAN also means that, contrary to paragraph 85 of the NPPF (5th bullet point), it will not be possible for the JSP planning authorities to satisfy themselves that Green Belt Boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period, as the pressures for additional development to accommodate an uplift to the OAN will necessitate a further detailed analysis of development opportunities within the Green Belt. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that:

“When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt Boundary.”

1.23 Without revisions to the Green Belt boundaries, and mindful of the JSPs’ unjustified prioritisation on brownfield sites, the only spatial option for addressing the scale of unmet housing need will require sites to come forward beyond the Green Belt. Such an approach would not be consistent with the Bristol focus and would fail to meet needs close to where that need is arising.

1.24 It would unavoidably result in a pattern of development that requires any and all additional housing need to be met in locations that would in all probability be progressively further away from Bristol. Therefore, given the acknowledged constraints posed in North Somerset by the natural environment and infrastructural capacity, this is likely to result in a highly unsustainable pattern of development, if indeed suitable additional sites could be identified and appropriately delivered at all.

1.25 Furthermore, the associated infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development are of such significance that it goes to the heart of the deliverability of the spatial strategy of the JSP. In these circumstances, it is an obvious point that the further away new homes are located from where the need for them arises, the more fundamental a problem this presents to the soundness of the Plan. Should capacity on the key transport links, including rail, and road, be readily identifiable to permit such growth, this might not fatally undermine the soundness of the Plan. However, it is clear from the scale and nature of the transport infrastructure proposed in support on the Plan within North Somerset alone, this is clearly not the case. This presents yet another concern as to the appropriateness and deliverability of the current approach of the JSP in respect of North Somerset.

1.26 By way of example, the November 2016 JSP proposes that as a Strategic Development Location, up to 3,600 new homes should be located at Nailsea/Backwell to the west of Bristol. The infrastructure improvements that are required to support this scale of growth is listed at Page 18 of the November 2016 document as:

- Station Improvements
- MetroBus
• Junction Improvements (including M5 Junction 21)

• J20 to Nailsea New Link.

1.27 This represents a significant and very expensive package of infrastructure that is required to be delivered in order to support development at Nailsea/Backwell. As set out at Page 18 of the consultation development at Nailsea and Backwell “will require transport infrastructure investment such as metrobus to significantly improve connectivity and maximise opportunities for sustainable travel”. Furthermore, it is noted that development at Nailsea/Backwell “will bring about significant challenges in terms of transport delivery”. Despite the recognition of these “significant challenges” the JSP document appears to downplay such concerns principally because development at this location would avoid development in the Green Belt.

1.28 The infrastructure provision required to support development at Nailsea/Backwell forms part of an extensive package of infrastructure / transport improvements that are required to support development throughout the JSP area. The JSP Joint Transport Study (Page 14) identifies an infrastructure funding requirement of £7.5 billion and is reliant upon both the public and private sectors. This is unquestionably a highly ambitious set of proposals, for which both technical feasibility and accurate costs cannot be presented at this stage. The proposals remain highly conceptual and in many respect, offer little more than a structured “wish list”.

1.29 This being the case, there remains a significant funding gap which is yet to be addressed. This represents a significant and potentially fatal blow to the delivery of the JSP objectives. The scale of infrastructure required to support development proposed in the JSP is linked to a scale of growth that we consider underestimates the actual need which, if addressed, would result in further infrastructure improvements necessary to support an uplift in growth, exacerbating the existing funding gap and raising further concerns as to the viability/deliverability of the JSP.

1.30 It is considered that the Spatial Strategy of the JSP should be updated to provide greater flexibility in terms of planned housing delivery but providing choice in terms of the scale and location of sites. At the heart of the need to revise the Spatial Strategy is the need to adopt a strategic approach to delivery that supports a significant uplift in housing. This strategy should not be artificially constrained by an unjustified emphasis/prioritisation of brownfield land/urban intensification. Rather, the revised Spatial Strategy should objectively identify wider opportunities for growth, including those locations the Green Belt.

1.31 The role and function of smaller towns and villages should not be excluded from the Spatial Strategy. The role of the main urban centres is understood and supported and future development should seek to support and reinforce their strategic economic and growth function. However, any such strategy should not result in a policy of constraint on wider, sustainable, opportunities for development.

1.32 On behalf of our client we are concerned that development opportunities located within the Green Belt have not been considered as genuine reasonable alternatives and critically, that such sites have not been assessed on a fair and equitable basis. Such failings would undermine the soundness of the JSP and indicated that the supporting Sustainability Appraisal would fail the test of adequacy.
1.33 We consider below the relevant Green Belt assessments prepared in support of the JSP and identify the shortcomings of this process. Such shortcomings need to be addressed to ensure that the JSP is supported by a robust and credible evidence base. This, alongside the need to consider a revised OAN that accurately reflect the need for housing arising across the JSP area, necessitates a further and comprehensive review of all reasonable alternative development option, including such locations/sites that fall within the designated Green Belt.

1.34 The JSP Green Belt Assessment (November 2015) splits the Bristol and Bath Green Belt into 79 Cells which are then assessed on whether or not it contributes to the five purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in the NPPF. The first stage of the JSP Green Belt Assessment examined the Green Belt in the West of England as a whole and whether Cells served one or more of the purposes of Green Belt as set out in the NPPF.

1.35 The Stage One assessment concludes that all Cells are identified as contributing to the purposes of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (Purpose 3) and assisting in urban regeneration (Purpose 5). As a result of this common assessment amongst all of the 79 Cells, it effectively removes Purposes 3 and 5 from the assessment process in terms of distinguishing between the relative contributions the 79 Cells make to the remaining purposes of the Green Belt.

1.36 In respect to Cell 71, which includes land promoted on behalf of our clients, to the east of Failand, save for Purposes 3 and 5, the Stage 1 Assessment concludes that the Cell contributes to Purpose 2 in terms of it helping “to prevent the merger of Nailsea, Long Aston and Bristol”. (Page 53, November 2015 JSP Green Belt Assessment).

1.37 The Stage 1 Assessment set out a broad brush assessment of Cells in that it did not consider the degree to which each Cell contributes to the purposes of Green Belt. This is in contrasts to the Stage 2 assessment which, in the case of Purpose 2 (encroachment), undertakes an assessment which has a sliding scale of the Cells contribution, ranging from ‘Moderate’ to ‘Limited contribution’. This is important as in the case of land promoted on behalf of our client (within Cell 71) an historic Secretary of State decision (4th August 2010: PINs ref: APP/D0121/A/09/2117326; LPA Ref: 09/P/1486/O) agreed with the Appeal Inspector’s Report that “As Failand is surrounded by countryside and some distance from the Bristol Boundary, the appeal development would not result in neighbouring towns merging into one another.” (Paragraph 404 of Inspector’s Report). This brings in to question the robustness of the Green Belt Assessment process to date.

1.38 The concerns regarding the JSP Green Belt Assessment are compounded further by the fact that the Stage 2 assessment only considers Cells/locations “where the consequences of change may need to be examined in more detail”. Moreover, the Stage 2 assessment is undertaken on the premise that it is justified to limit the geographic scope because otherwise it “would involve examining land where there may be little proposed of significant change”. This effectively pre-determines the locations to be assesses through the Stage 2 assessment, which raises serious questions as to the extent to which the JSP has considered all reasonable alternatives on a fair and equitable basis.
1.39 A separate assessment undertaken by North Somerset Council (May 2011) was also limited in its geographical scope as it only focused on the area immediately to the south west of Bristol, to reflect the previous strategy set out in the now revoked Regional Spatial Strategy.

1.40 In any event both the JSP Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment (November 2016) and that undertaken by North Somerset Council (2011), do not provide a sound basis upon which the overarching spatial strategy and distribution of future development in the JSP area can be justified as it is evident that all reasonable alternatives have not been considered on a fair and equitable basis.

1.41 As set out previously, given that all cells contribute to the purposes 3 and 5 of the Green Belt, it is Purposes 2 which is the key determinant in excluding Cell 71 from further assessment, on the basis that Cell 71 contributes to the purposes of preventing the merger of Nailsea, Long Aston and Bristol. This conclusion relates to the entire extent of Cell 71 which extends from the North Western edge of Long Aston to the North East edge of Nailsea, and does not consider development opportunities that existing within the Cells. It therefore fails to identify site options within a Cell that would in themselves, not materially contribute to coalescence which, when considered against the more refined Stage 2 analysis would be considered to make a “limited contribution” to this purpose of the Green Belt. Such development site options would then be considered more favourable in terms of the Green Belt Assessment process.

1.42 Historically North Somerset has been opposed to the release of land from the Green Belt and specifically to the potential for urban extensions to the South West of Bristol. Previously the RSS for the South West (Policy HMA 1) sought to reinforce and support Bristol’s potential as a major driver of the regional economy at the centre of a wider city region. Across the West of England HMA the RSS identified the need to provide for about 137,950 new homes, this included the provision of 10,500 new homes in the south west of Bristol, 9,000 of which were proposed to be provided within the North Somerset administrative area, with the remaining 1,500 to be provided in Bristol. The RSS confirmed that in order to accommodate new development at the South West of Bristol, as well as elsewhere on Bristol City’s boundaries this would require the removal of the Green Belt to accommodate urban extensions as proposed.

1.43 The North Somerset Issues and Options Consultation (October 2007) was prepared in the context of the RSS. The Consultation document presented a number of options to implement the RSS requirement at South West Bristol, one of these options (Option D) sought to disperse development to existing settlements, including Long Ashton, Flax Bourton and Failand. It was recognised in the 2007 Issues and Options Consultation that this approach to the distribution of development at South West Bristol could contribute to enhance services throughout these existing areas.
1.44 The Consultation draft of the North Somerset Core Strategy (November 2009) confirmed the Council’s resistance to the proposed strategy set out in the RSS by stating that no development is proposed at South West Bristol and therefore no change to the Green Belt would occur. This objection was deliberate and with full knowledge that it conflicted within the RSS and that were the RSS to be adopted then the North Somerset Core Strategy would have to be consistent with it. The decision to not advance options at the South West of Bristol was on the basis that the future of the RSS at that time was uncertain. The Revocation of Regional Strategies came into effect on 20th May 2013.

1.45 The JSP represents the exceptional circumstances which justify the re-assessment of development opportunities within the designated Green Belt and when set within the context of our concerns relating to the appropriateness of the OAN as currently identified, this necessitates a further and detailed review of the development options from sites located within the Green Belt.

1.46 We are also aware that the elected Members of North Somerset Council are becoming increasingly concerned as to the potential of Nailsea and Backwell to deliver even the level of development currently being proposed, let alone any further increase. For example, the Council’s Strategic Planning and Economic Development policy and scrutiny panel (SPED) discuss these concerns very recently on November 23rd 2016 with various Members calling for a Green Belt Review to be carried out as a priority.

1.47 This further assessment should be based on a robust and fair and equitable assessment of all reasonable alternative options. This includes our clients land east of Failand as set out below.

**Land East of Failand**

1.48 The Land promoted on behalf of our client comprises circa 22ha of low grade agricultural land, within the Green Belt, immediately adjacent to the east of Failand. Failand is located approximately 5km south west of the urban fringe of Bristol, approximately 4km east of Nailsea. Junction 19 of the M5 is within 5km to the west, offering links to the A369 towards Avonmouth and the A370 towards Weston Super Mare. Within the JSP consultation document, the site is situated within the ‘Strategic Transport Improvement’ area between from south west Bristol towards Nailsea, as shown in Figure 5 of the 2016 consultation document.

1.49 Land east of Failand has the potential to deliver a suitable and sustainable high quality and integrated neighbourhood, one that facilitates the delivery of community infrastructure that would serve to build a sustainable community in support of both existing and new residents. Located within 5km of Bristol City Centre, this site benefits from an exceptionally close geographical relationship with Bristol and thereby supports the role and function of the City as the economic, social and cultural powerhouse of the region.

1.50 Development at Failand can be supported through a revised Spatial Strategy, one that accurately reflects the true scale of OAN in the region and is based on a consideration of all reasonable alternatives. Development at Failand is not promoted as an alternative to those strategic locations currently identified in the JSP, rather it is promoted on the basis that a further review of the Green Belt is necessary, and critically, this site ensures choice in terms of locations thereby adding to the certainty of overall housing supply.
1.51 Crucially, and in contrast to many of the locations currently identified in the emerging JSP, the site is not dependent upon significant infrastructure improvements and can in fact support improvements to the infrastructure at Failand to improve the sustainability attributes of this settlement in the short and medium terms. The landowners intend to engage with the local community and other key stakeholders as part of the promotion of the land and to create a comprehensive master plan for its development. Ultimately, land at Failand can make a positive contribution to the spatial objectives established through the JSP.

1.52 The site promoted was previously subject to a planning application (LPA Ref: 09/P/1486/O) comprising the followed proposed development:

“Outline permission for a proposed residential development of up to 500 dwellings, 60no C2 residential apartments with care for persons aged 60 and over, a single form entry primary school, B1 employment space, convenience store, doctors surgery, public open space, landscaping, highway and associated infrastructure.”

1.53 The application was supported by a range of technical assessments and the relevant site specific issues are identified below

Landscape Considerations.

1.54 The Landscape and Visual Analysis demonstrates that the site is located within a character area of low to moderate sensitivity to change due to its lack of landscape features and that a high quality development, with a hierarchy of streets and open spaces will create a high quality landscape and settlement structure with a strong sense of place and the overall effects will be moderately beneficial.

1.55 The analysis also notes that the most sensitive character areas are the Tyntesfield Historic Park (registered park) and Ashton Hill Plantation but the majority of these areas have no intervisiblility with the site. Close up views of the site can be mitigated with a buffer corridor along the south of the site reducing the effect to negligible in the long term. Furthermore, Failand itself is of low sensitivity and that the proposed development provides significant opportunities to enhance the sense of place through appropriate urban design and extensive green infrastructure, including a new central open space.

1.56 The Zone of Visual Influence is small due to the combination of the built development of Failand to the west, Ashton Hill Plantation to the south and tree and hedgerow planting within and adjacent to recreational land to the east.

1.57 The Landscape and Visual Analysis concludes that the site forms a logical extension to Failand within a relatively enclosed character area of low sensitivity within only a small number of residential receptors. There are significant opportunities to enhance the sense of place for Failand whilst at the same time mitigate the impact upon the more sensitive landscape character area to the south of the site.
Flood Risk

1.58 The entire site falls within Flood Zone 1 (as defined by the Environment Agency’s (EA) Flood) which comprises land assessed as having a low risk flooding.

Ecology

1.59 Previous ecological assessments undertaken in support of development of this site confirmed that the site is not covered, either wholly or partially, by any statutory designations, although a European level designation (SAC) is within 5km radius of the site and two national-level designations (SSSI) are within 2km of the site, (Avon Gorge SSSI and Ashton Court SSSI). The site has previously been appraised and it was concluded that the site is not considered that the majority of site supports any significant areas of habitats and the impact on other ecological features can be adequately mitigated, enhanced and or compensated for, through appropriate planning conditions. Overall, no significant ecological constraints were previously identified that would prevent the site from coming forward through development subject to appropriate conditions.

1.60 An updated ecological assessment will be required in support of any future development proposal but it is evident from previous assessments that there can be confidence that there are not absolute ecological constraints associated with development at this site.

Access and Movement

1.61 The site is strategically well located to access key urban areas of Bristol in particular, which is the main focus of economic growth in the Region. It should be noted that in terms of proximity to the central area, Land East of Failand is substantially closer than any other locations proposed for strategic release, being within only 3 miles from the mainline station at Temple Meads.

1.62 The site benefits from being within a mile of the existing Long Ashton Park and Ride (P+R) site, being directly linked within 1.2 km along an uncongested road where neither link or junction capacity is under significant pressure. The P+R site already offers frequent services into central Bristol. Within eighteen months, it understood that Metrobus will directly serve the P+R site, radically improving the speed frequency and reliability of the already-excellent links to Bristol City Centre, and extending the services beyond towards the University of the West of England and the Northern Fringe, and Hengrove. Services will also connect to employment opportunities, both existing and proposed in South Bristol. The site thus takes advantage of exceptional opportunities for sustainable transport, already presented on the doorstep, and where a further step change in service capacity, quality and attractiveness will have been accomplished within the anticipated timescales for the preparation of the JSP.

1.63 The site also falls within the ‘Strategic Transport Improvement’ corridor from Bristol westwards towards Nailsea identified in the Transport Study. As such, wider infrastructure improvements mean that the site has the potential to benefit from further improvements to the strategic transport network in due course. This could include new regular public transport links from Portishead via Long Ashton P+R, taking advantage of the metrobus line to reach destinations south and south-west of Bristol.
1.64 The Transport Assessment previously undertaken will require updating but its conclusions serve to reinforce the suitability of this site for development. Additional traffic generated by development at this site would be expected to be accommodated onto the existing highway network and would not materially affect the safety and characteristics of the local network.

1.65 Furthermore, development at east Failand will deliver a range of new community facilities which can reduce the propensity of existing residents to travel further afield to access everyday services and facilities, thereby significantly improving the sustainability credentials of this settlement.

**Contribution to the Purposes of the Green Belt**

1.66 We have set out previously our concerns regarding the Green Belt Assessment process and the need to ensure that any future consideration of additional site options, necessary to address a future uplift in the identified OAN, includes a further comprehensive review of the Green Belt. The table below provides a summary of the contribution land east of Failand is considered to make to the purposes of the Green Belt.

**Table 1: Land East of Failand: contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</td>
<td>No contribution</td>
<td>The site is not adjacent to a major urban conurbation. Rather it provides a logical extension to the settlement of Failand with the key benefits of improving the range of services and facilities at this village. It forms part of a range of site/location options which can reduce the reliance upon extensions to the major urban areas. The development is contained due to its location and landscape features such that it would not represent a physical extension to the existing urban areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</td>
<td>No contribution.</td>
<td>The village of Failand is separated from other settlements to such an extent that new development cannot reasonably be considered to represent coalescence. This was confirmed by the 2010 Appeal APP/D0121/A/09/2117326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</td>
<td>Moderate contribution</td>
<td>The Landscape and Visual Analysis concludes that the site forms a logical extension to Failand within a relatively enclosed character area of low sensitivity within only a small number of residential receptors. There are significant opportunities to enhance the sense of place for Failand whilst at the same time mitigate the impact upon the more sensitive landscape character area to the south of the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</td>
<td>No contribution</td>
<td>Land at Failand does not adjoin a Conservation Area and it does not adjoin the Tyntesfield Historic Park (registered park)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.</td>
<td>Limited Contribution.</td>
<td>The site is located within 5km of Bristol and as such has the potential to support the economic function of the City.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

1.67 It is evident from the information set out above that land at Failand promoted on behalf of our client represents a genuine reasonable alternative development option. We have set out fundamental concerns regarding the soundness of the JSP in terms of the Objectively Assessed Need and the corresponding proposed Spatial Strategy.

1.68 It is considered that the further revisions to the JSP will be required which in our view will necessitate a significant uplift in housing provision over the Plan period. This will in turn require a review of the spatial development strategy and the options for development necessary to achieve a future uplift in housing provision which must include a further review of the Green Belt.

1.69 The general resistance to development within the Green Belt fails to ensure that the JSP is compliant with Paragraph 84 of the NPPF which requires planning authorities to take into account the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, which should satisfy the wider requirements of the NPPF in terms of OAN. Moreover, local planning authorities should, when reviewing the Green Belt boundaries, consider the suitability of directing growth towards towns or village’s inset within the Green Belt.

1.70 Any further Green Belt assessment, required to address an uplift to the OAN, should ensure that there is a fair and equitable assessment of all reasonable alternatives. Land east of Failand is promoted to the JSP for consideration as a sustainable and deliverable location which is close to the regional powerhouse of Bristol and at the same time does not require significant upfront infrastructure to bring it forward for development. It also offers a positive opportunity to deliver significant benefits to the local community.

We would be grateful if you could kindly acknowledge receipt of this correspondence including that it is duly made. If you should require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Alistair Macdonald
Director

Enc. Appendix 1: Site Area Plan & Appendix 2: Site Submission Form
APPENDIX 1: Site Area Plan
APPENDIX 2: Site Submission Form
West of England Joint Spatial Plan
Towards the Emerging Spatial Strategy consultation
Site Submission Form

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

Please return this form if you are suggesting a site to be considered in the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (WoE JSP). All previously submitted sites to the WoE JSP are available to view on an online map at: http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/app/JSPsubmittedsites/

For each site please complete a separate form and provide a map that clearly and accurately identifies the site boundary.

Completed forms and site location plans should be emailed to: comment@jointplanningwofe.org.uk

Data Protection Statement: This information is collected by Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council as data controller in accordance with the data protection principles in the Data Protection Act 1998. The purposes for collecting this data are: to assist in plan making, to contact you, if necessary, regarding the answers given on this form, and to keep you informed of progress with plan making. Some of the data relating to specific sites will be made public as it will form part of the evidence base used to inform the creation of planning policy documents. The above purposes may require public disclosure of any data received on the form, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has this site previously been submitted?</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If the site has already been submitted, how does the information provided in this form change the information you have previously provided to us?

Not to the JSP process
**2. YOUR DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Alistair Macdonald</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company/Organisation (if applicable)</td>
<td>Boyer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Address       | 130 Aztec  
Aztec West  
Bristol  
BS32 4UB   |
| Telephone     |                             |
| Email         |                             |

**Status (please tick all that apply)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner of (all or part of) the site</th>
<th>Land Agent</th>
<th>Planning Consultant</th>
<th>Developer</th>
<th>Amenity/ Community Group</th>
<th>Local Resident</th>
<th>Registered Social Housing Provider</th>
<th>Other (please specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ X ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If acting on behalf of Landowner / developer please provide client name and address details:**

C/O Agent

**I (or my client)…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is sole owner of the site</th>
<th>Owns part of the site</th>
<th>Do not own (or hold any legal interest in) the site whatsoever</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ X ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If Owner/Part Owner, have you attached a title plan and deeds with this form?**

Yes [ ]  
No [ X ]

**If you are not the owner, or own only part of the site, do you know who owns the site or the remainder of it (please provide details)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the owner (or other owner(s)) support your proposals for the site?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Yes [ X ]  
No [ ]                                                             |
3. SITE DETAILS

- **Site Address (including postcode where applicable)**: Land East of Failand
- **Site Area (Hectares) (if known)**: 22ha approx
- **Current land use(s)**: Agriculture
- **Adjacent land use(s)**: Residential/Agricultural
- **Relevant planning history (if known)**: LPA Ref: 09/P/1486/O

Please tick box to confirm you have provided a site plan [ X]

4. POTENTIAL USES & CAPACITY

Suggested uses (please tick all that apply and where mixed use indicate % of overall site for each use)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE</th>
<th>Capacity (number of units) and indication of possible residential tenures, types and housing for different groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>YES Circa 500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE</th>
<th>Floorspace (m²) / number of floors/pitches / notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office, research &amp; development, light industrial (B1)</td>
<td>Yes/No TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General industrial (B2) / warehousing (B8)</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports / leisure (please specify)</td>
<td>Yes/No TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Yes/No TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional notes about potential uses:

- Residential led development with exact mix of uses to be confirmed
### 5. SITE SUITABILITY ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Further details including details of further studies undertaken / mitigation proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the site have any physical constraints (e.g. topography, access, severe slope, vegetation cover etc.)?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the site subject to flooding?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the site affected by ‘bad neighbour’ uses (e.g. power lines, railway lines, major highways, heavy industry)?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a possibility that the site is contaminated?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can satisfactory vehicular access to the site be achieved?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the Highways Agency been consulted?</td>
<td>YES In respect of previous application – No objection subject to condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the site subject to any other key constraints?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UTILITIES / INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION**

Please tell us which of the following utilities are available to the site

- Mains water supply [x]
- Mains sewerage [x]
- Electrical supply [x]
- Gas supply [x]
- Landline telephone [x]
- Broadband internet [x]
- Other (please specify below) [x]

Please provide any other relevant information relating to site suitability issues:
### 6. SITE AVAILABILITY ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments/further details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any legal/ownership constraints on the site that might prohibit or delay development of the site (e.g. ransom strip/covenants)?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must land off-site be acquired to develop the site?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any current uses which need to be relocated?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the site owned by a developer or is the owner willing to sell?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimated delivery rate:** When do you think the site would come forward for development? (Where a development will be phased over more than one period please indicate this)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within the next 5 years</th>
<th>6-10 years</th>
<th>11-20 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>380</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have any information to support when the site will come forward and its phasing? Please consider suitability, achievability and constraints.

The site is considered suitable, achievable and deliverable. It is not subject to any constraints that cannot be appropriately mitigated.

### 7. SITE ACHIEVABILITY ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments/further details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any known significant abnormal development costs (e.g. contamination remediation, demolition, access etc.)? If yes, please specify.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the site require significant new infrastructure investment to be suitable for development? If yes, please specify.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any issues that may influence the economic viability, delivery rates or timing of the development? If yes, please specify.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a viability assessment / financial appraisal of the scheme been undertaken?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have any design work studies been undertaken?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ONLY IN RESPECT OF PREVIOUS OUTLINE APPLICATION*
8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet and attach to this form.

Site is being promoted in conjunction with the West of England Joint Structure Plan – please see representations.