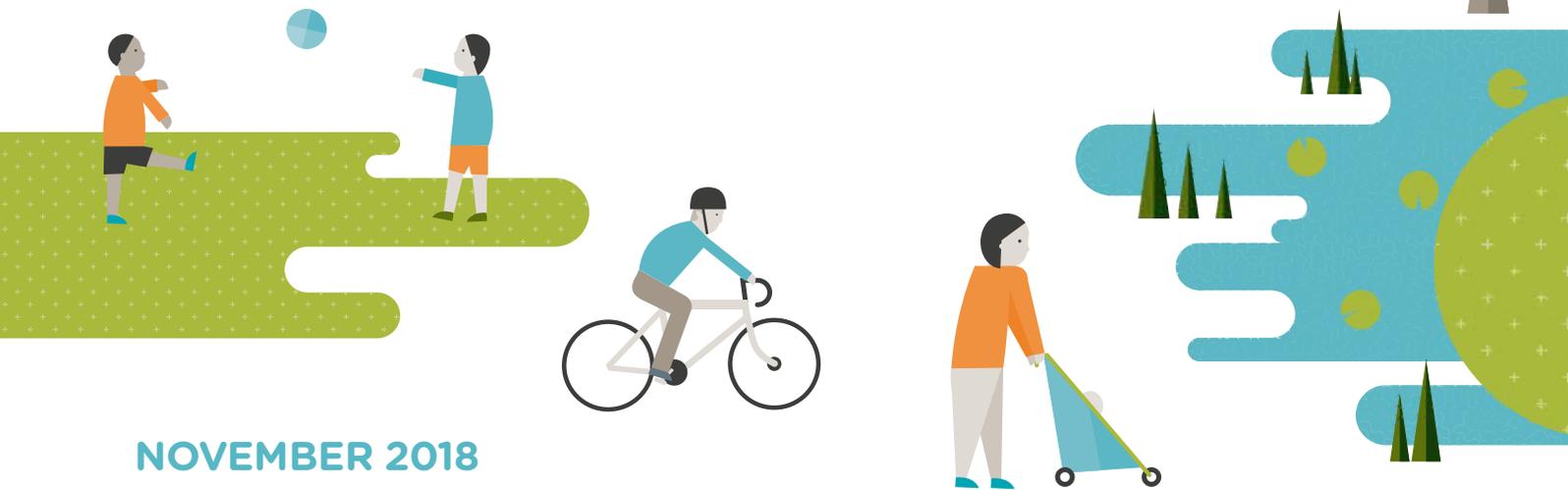


West of England Joint Spatial Plan

Justification of the requirements for the
12 Strategic Development Locations
7.2 Whitchurch



NOVEMBER 2018

Joint Spatial Plan Examination

WED 004B: Justification of the requirements for the 12 Strategic Development Locations in Policy 7.1 - 7.12 (Nov 2018)

SDL Policy 7.2 Whitchurch

Introduction

1. The Strategic Development Location at Whitchurch has been identified in the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) as an appropriate location for delivering significant new homes and jobs. It is well-related to Bristol but will require significant improvement in infrastructure to ensure it is sustainable. In light of highly sensitive environment within and surrounding the location, clear site requirements need to be established at an early stage. Technical work published through the Locational Dashboards (SD11C), and SDL Templates (SD11A) identified potential for strategic growth at this location. This was informed by call for sites (SD11F) information indicating land availability. The strategic principles and infrastructure requirements are also supported by the Transport Topic Paper (SD16A) and Joint Transport Study (SD16B).

	JSP Criteria	Reasoned Justification	Proposed Amendments
1	<p><i>Around 2,500 new homes, optimising densities with 1,600 homes built in the plan period, including affordable housing.</i></p>	<p>Submission document SD11A provides the overview of the development potential of the Whitchurch SDL. This was based on a high level desktop assessment of the development capacity of the area (see p11). Document SD11C indicates potential for additional strategic growth in the general area of Whitchurch.</p> <p>The B&NES Local Plan (2016-36) Background Paper Whitchurch Strategic Development Location (Winter 2017 WED 124) provides an overview of the key pieces of evidence base.</p> <p>The Whitchurch Strategic Planning Framework (October 2018) produced a number of development options based on an analysis of evidence, an exploration of the context and a more detailed assessment of its capacity for absorbing development. This has resulted in a suggested change from the 2,500 total housing capacity identified in the JSP to 2,000 total housing capacity. There is no change from the expectation of delivering 1,600 homes within the plan period.</p>	<p><i>Around 2,500 2,000 new homes, optimising densities with 1,600 homes built in the plan period, including affordable housing.</i></p>
2	<p><i>Provide retail, healthcare and community facilities, two new primary schools and a secondary school.</i></p>	<p>This criterion is in accordance with national policy on placemaking as set out in the NPPF.</p> <p>Education facilities The education requirement is based on educational needs generated by the development and an assessment of existing provision. Based on the provision of 2,000 dwellings at Whitchurch, a new single 3 form entry primary school with 630 places would be required, as will a new 600 place (120 per year group) secondary school with a 160 place (approx.) sixth form. These requirements originate from the B&NES Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2017 - 2021 (WED 127)</p> <p>Community and Healthcare facilities The SDL must provide for health needs as this is a fundamental tenet of sustainable development (NPPG para 7). Strategic policies should make sufficient provision for health and community facilities (156). The exact nature of provision of healthcare will be determined through the Local Plan.</p> <p>Retail There is a need to ensure the provision of a local centre to support the community and to provide for their day-to-day needs. The B&NES Retail Study (2018) identifies that a new</p>	

		<p>local centre should be anchored by a modest sized convenience store and the centre should contain between 5-10 units of generally no more than 150sq m gross in size. The Study states that there should also be a diverse mix of units across Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and Class D.</p> <p>The location and nature of the local centre within the development is one that requires further assessment through the Local Plan.</p>	
3	<i>Deliver environmental enhancements to Whitchurch village and its local centre.</i>	<p>This requirement is justified by the significant change that will be arise at Whitchurch Village in light of the new development. It seeks to ensure that existing communities are not harmed by new development but instead benefit from improvements (see para 58, NPPF 2012)</p>	
4	<i>Establish a Green Infrastructure network that meets the needs of the development and includes the existing open gap between Whitchurch village and the Bristol urban area and the landscape character of Stockwood Vale.</i>	<p>B&NES Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013 (WED 122) identifies the District's Green infrastructure network (see Core Strategy – Map 11 page 88) with one of the strategic corridor links being Whitchurch to Bristol Hicks Gate via Stockwood Vale.</p> <p>In keeping with national policy and guidance, green infrastructure should be incorporated into any development proposals</p>	
5	<i>Include employment spaces at a quantum and of a type to be determined though the Local Plan.</i>	<p>A large employment allocation has not been made at this SDL in light of its proximity to the Bristol urban area and the employment opportunities available there, facilitated by sustainable transport improvements to the City. However, more local employment opportunities will be pursued via the Local Plan.</p>	
6	<i>Preserve and/or enhance the Queen Charlton Conservation Area, and the Maes Knoll and Wansdyke Scheduled Monuments and their settings.</i>	<p>National policy provides that local planning authorities should conserve and enhance the historic environment.</p> <p>An extensive evidence base was commissioned to inform the JSP and emerging Local Plan policy. The B&NES Local Plan (2016-36) Background Paper Whitchurch Strategic Development Location (Winter 2017 WED 124) provides an overview of the key pieces of evidence base.</p> <p>The studies identified that:</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development to the west of the A37 at Whitchurch (area 08) was identified as having potential for significant setting change to Maes Knoll, the Wansdyke, Whitewood Farm and New Barn Farm. A high risk of harm to heritage assets was concluded for this area, and this has been excluded from the proposed development area in the Local Plan. • There is potential for setting change to the Queen Charlton Conservation area and to the Wansdyke Scheduled Monument, and that the level of harm is dependent on the extent and nature of development. For area (04) there was significant potential for setting change to Queen Charlton Conservation Area, likely approaching substantial harm. A high risk of harm to heritage assets was concluded for this area, and this has been excluded from the proposed development area in the Local Plan. 	
<p>7</p>	<p><i>Provision of key transport infrastructure including:</i></p> <p><i>i multi-modal link connecting A4, A37 and the south Bristol link road;</i></p> <p><i>ii Park & Ride provision;</i></p> <p><i>iii Metrobus (high quality public transport) route from Bristol on the A4 – A37 link;</i></p> <p><i>iv pedestrian and cycle connections in all directions which link the site with key services and facilities. These include extending and improving walking and cycling routes to Bristol, Keynsham and to the countryside to the south; and</i></p>	<p>In respect of each of the sub-clauses under this criterion, Examination Document SD16A para 4.3 outlines the transport programme to address the needs generated by SDL. This comprises both strategic interventions and more localised improvements and is designed to improve travel choices (and maximise opportunities for mode shift) and mitigate the impacts of additional traffic. The Emerging Findings Transport Report (WED 008) Para 2.2 explains why schemes were selected or rejected</p> <p>Clause i)</p> <p>The justification for a multi-modal link connecting the A4, A37 and the south Bristol link road is set out in Paragraphs 6.1 and 6.5 of Submission document SD16B. In essence, improving road infrastructure will significantly improve orbital connectivity and improve radial routes which currently struggle with high levels of congestion and poor access to the wider transport network. This will provide new capacity for sustainable forms of travel in this area.</p> <p>Clause ii)</p> <p>A fully integrated public transport network will be developed, with significant improvements to the bus network to cater for most journey needs, complemented by an expanded MetroBus network, a new mass transit network, Park & Ride and enhanced rail</p>	<p>Provision of key transport infrastructure including:</p> <p>i multi-modal link connecting A4, A37 and the south Bristol link road;</p> <p>ii Park & Ride provision;</p> <p>iii Metrobus (high quality public transport) route from Bristol on the A4 – A37 link;</p> <p>iv pedestrian and cycle connections in all directions which link the site with key services and facilities. These include extending and improving walking and cycling routes to Bristol, Keynsham and to the countryside to the south; and</p>

<p><i>v off-site junction improvements including at Hicks Gate.</i></p> <p><i>No dwellings will be completed at the Whitchurch SDL ahead of:</i></p> <p><i>i Park & Ride, and</i> <i>ii the multi-modal link A4-A37-south Bristol link including as a pre-requisite, the Callington Road scheme being completed.</i></p> <p><i>The strategic infrastructure listed above should not prejudice a full Transportation Assessment which will be required for each location.</i></p>	<p>services catering for the full range of journey needs in the West of England. This will also deliver significant reductions in congestion and reductions in carbon emissions by reducing a wide range of car journeys, many of which are currently made by car because of the lack of public transport alternatives.</p> <p>SD16B Table 4-1 Interchange and Park & Ride The public transport networks will in future operate as a more integrated system. Effective interchange between all modes (bus, MetroBus, mass transit and rail) will be essential. Park & Ride facilities will also intercept traffic at the edges of the urban areas to facilitate reallocation of roadspace to active modes and public transport on radial routes.</p> <p>SD16B para 4.4.3 p.42 Interchange and Park & Ride On the edges of the urban areas, Park & Ride sites will play an important role in catering for people living outside of the urban areas who do not have easy access to public transport near to where they live. It is recognised that they will need to drive for part of their journey, but Park & Ride would give them the opportunity to transfer to public transport for their onward journey into the urban areas. The Park & Ride sites will also facilitate interchange between new radial and orbital bus and MetroBus services, allowing people to easily transfer between services for journeys in different directions.</p> <p>Clause iii) SD16A Table 4.1 shows the requirement for a Metrobus service along the A4 corridor between Keynsham and Bristol, incorporating Callington Road link to reduce congestion on the A4.</p> <p>Clause iv) SD16B para 1.1 p. 1 West of England Transport Vision The technical work in the Joint Transport Study was used to develop the Transport Vision for the West of England. The Transport Vision includes all modes of travel and comprises a programme of complementary schemes that are designed to achieve a significant mode shift from the car and ensure a more efficient, resilient transport network. The Transport Vision is designed to address existing transport problems and respond to the challenges associated with the high levels of forecast growth in the West of England.</p> <p>The Transport Vision supports a transformation in travel behaviour in the West of England,</p>	<p>v off-site junction improvements including at Hicks Gate. No dwellings will be completed at the Whitchurch SDL ahead of:</p> <p>i Park & Ride, and</p> <p>ii the multi-modal link A4-A37-south Bristol link including as a pre-requisite, the Callington Road scheme being completed.</p> <p>The strategic infrastructure listed above should not prejudice a full Transportation Assessment which will be required for each location.</p>
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including more than doubling the trips made by cycling and public transport, resulting in a significant reduction in the mode split for journeys by car. The Transport Vision sets a target for no overall increase in the number of trips by car across the sub-region set against the backdrop of delivering 105,000 new homes. This Vision is required to unlock the delivery of new homes and jobs, improve economic performance and competitiveness, tackle health and inequality challenges and support the delivery of ambitious CO2 reduction targets.

SD16B para 4.3, p.33 Managing traffic demand and a more resilient road network

Significant investment in the road network will support the ambitions for changing people's travel behaviour, through enabling reallocation of roadspace to walking, cycling and public transport on congested urban corridors and directing traffic to more appropriate corridors. New and improved road infrastructure will be designed to support the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, including multi-modal transport corridors to support the ambitious growth proposals in the area and to unlock the economic potential of areas including South Bristol.

SD16B 4.4.2. p.38 Active Travel

Walking is the most sustainable form of travel, requiring no vehicle, with physical activity being the main feature of the journey. It is arguably the most viable form of travel for short journeys within communities and can be an attractive option for most journeys of at least one mile. Within the main urban areas, particularly Bath and inner Bristol, it is already highly popular for commuting and other day-to-day travel needs. Walking will become even more important with the emphasis on Urban Living in the Joint Spatial Plan. This focus on intensification of development in the Bristol urban area, Weston-super-Mare and Bath will result in shorter journeys for which walking should be an attractive option. However, this will require continued investment to improve the attractiveness of walking, including local traffic management schemes, improved wayfinding, pedestrian crossings and effective maintenance of footways.

The popularity of cycling has increased significantly in recent years, particularly within Bristol, due to people's desire to incorporate cycling into their daily lives and in response to significant investment in cycling facilities. It can be an attractive option for journeys up to five miles, but encouraging more cycling is dependent on several factors. Significant progress has been made in providing more cycle parking at destinations, together with

	<p>changing facilities at several major employers. However, more is needed to create safer, more attractive facilities on the road network, including providing segregated lanes and adequate facilities at junctions.</p> <p>There is a strong case for improving facilities where there are already large numbers of cyclists (e.g. Gloucester Road in Bristol). In addition, measures are required to improve the attractiveness of cycling where it is currently less popular but there is potential to encourage mode shift. It is important to recognise the constraints caused by steep hills, particularly Bath and parts of Bristol. This will constrain the ability to encourage large volumes of cycling in places with more hilly terrain. However, future adoption of electric bikes (e-bikes) could help to mitigate the effects of slopes in some cases.</p> <p>There was strong support in the Issues and Options consultation for walking and cycling investment. The Vision has a strong focus on active travel – both walking and cycling – particularly within the urban areas. This will build on the recent success of Cycling City and other programmes in increasing active travel. It also makes provision for strategic cycling routes connecting to key towns, together with major radial and orbital routes in the urban areas. The delivery of improved cycling routes on some corridors will require reallocation of roadspace and/or traffic restrictions, which will require some difficult decisions by the local authorities.</p> <p>The Transport Vision proposes transformational investment in the cycle networks in the Bristol urban area, Bath and Weston-super-Mare.</p> <p>Encouraging walking and cycling is one of the Core Principles of the NPPF (2012) See para 17.</p> <p>Clause v) The Emerging Findings Transport Report WED 008 (Nov 2018) para 2.2 identifies the need for At-grade junction improvement to be part of the transport package for this SDL</p>	
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