



West of England Joint Spatial Plan

Justification of the requirements for the
12 Strategic Development Locations
7.4 Backwell



NOVEMBER 2018

Joint Spatial Plan Examination

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

SDL Policy 7.4 Backwell

Introduction

1. The Backwell SDL is closely related to strategic development proposed at Nailsea, with a package of transport interventions devised to facilitate both. Together, these developments will provide employment opportunities, services and facilities which complement the higher-level services in Nailsea and further afield. It will assist the case for a step change in strategic public transport provision in the locality through the extension of the Metrobus to Nailsea Station and the new Nailsea development area which will improve sustainable access to major employment opportunities, services and facilities. Significant highway infrastructure will be required including a new route connecting the A370 to Nailsea. The separate identity of Backwell and Nailsea will be maintained and important environmental and heritage assets sensitively treated whilst maintaining the extent of the Green Belt.
2. 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	<i>Delivery of an extension to Backwell village to create a sympathetic and well-designed development appropriate to its rural setting of around 700 dwellings including affordable housing.</i>	<p>Submission Document SD11C indicates potential for additional strategic growth at Backwell. Document SD11F provides the call for sites submission indicating land availability.</p> <p>A broad development area was identified to which a standard methodology for calculating housing capacity has been used. This is explained in document SD11B, section 5. It is anticipated that further work through the Local Plan will refine this calculation, which will be informed by more detailed work and masterplanning of the SDL. Affordable housing is expected to form part of the mix of dwellings in order to provide for mixed and balanced communities.</p>	
2	<i>Lower densities will be expected on more sensitive parts of the site, including to safeguard heritage and ecological assets</i>	<p>The significance of heritage assets and ecological features in the general area has been identified (see SD11C). Document SD11A describes the potential to create ‘soft’ edges to the development blending well into the surrounding countryside and safeguarding heritage features including West Town Conservation Area and associated listed buildings.</p> <p>A lower density, informal edge is likely to reflect the rural character of the area and allow green links to penetrate into the village extension.</p> <p>It is considered that density treatments can be tailored appropriately to respond to local circumstances and features.</p>	
3	<i>Creation of new footpath and cycleways linking the site to the rail station, proposed MetroBus connections and local services and facilities.</i>	<p>Document SD16A outlines in paragraph 2.4 the key principle of “a requirement to maximise the effectiveness of sustainable travel choices and encourage greater use of rail, MetroBus, Park & Ride, bus, cycling and walking. This aims to minimise car-based travel to/from the development areas.”</p> <p>There is an opportunity to maximise access to Nailsea and Backwell station given the relative close proximity of the site. Access to local facilities and services using safe, and attractive routes is considered a key requirement for this development site in order to support the use of sustainable travel modes and is consistent with national advice which encourages opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.</p> <p>There is potential to create a more direct, safe route via Moor Lane or similar.</p>	

4	<p><i>Improvements to the rail station to create a multimodal interchange including enhanced parking, facilitating increased frequency and capacity, accessibility and accommodating a MetroBus interchange.</i></p>	<p>Access to Nailsea and Backwell Station offers the opportunity to support sustainable access to Bristol and other locations by means other than the private car. Development can support this objective by improving access and contributing to improvements, for example. The detailed requirements will be determined through the Local Plan and further transport studies and will include investigation of either decked or additional expansion of parking facilities, lifts to platforms and other accessibility improvements.</p> <p>Document SD16A outlines in paragraph 2.4 the key principle of “a requirement to maximise the effectiveness of sustainable travel choices and encourage greater use of rail, MetroBus, Park & Ride, bus, cycling and walking. This aims to minimise car-based travel to/from the development areas”. National advice encourages opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are. Paragraph 3.3 of SD16E recognises that “failure to provide adequate travel choices in new developments means that residents become reliant on cars, and it then becomes very difficult to encourage them to consider more sustainable travel choices.”</p>	
5	<p><i>Local junction improvements will be required including at Station Road, and the A370 Backwell signalised junction.</i></p>	<p>Figure 3-1 <i>Traffic Congestion in the West of England</i> within document SD16A identifies Backwell signalised junction as a ‘congestion hotspot’ and it is recognised that this is a constraint upon development in Backwell without mitigation. The A370 Backwell junction and Station Road are already oversaturated with traffic movements at peak times.</p> <p>The detailed requirements will be determined through the Local Plan and further transport studies.</p>	
6	<p><i>Provision of a primary school of at least 2.4ha to be located to maximise safe access from surrounding communities by walking and cycling.</i></p>	<p>NSC use a pupil projection model to estimate schools required on each development based on the estimated population increase and the nature of the housing proposed. No additional secondary provision is identified. The size requirement is the NSC standard for a 420 place primary school. No additional secondary provision is identified.</p>	
7	<p><i>Protection of the settings of historic Chelvey and West Town Conservation Area and the need for sensitive</i></p>	<p>The principle of protecting the historic settlement of Chelvey and its church in terms of visual impact and its setting was identified early in the process. Chelvey sits to the west of the proposed SDL and the landform and hedgerow features present between</p>	

	<p><i>treatment in respect of the setting of Grove Farm.</i></p>	<p>the two currently act to some extent as a visual barrier. The design of any new development must be sensitive to this issue.</p> <p>The proposed SDL is likely to be in close proximity to West Town Conservation Area, and the open setting to the west of the village is considered to support the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, initial exploration of the SDL, including through the LP Issues and Options WED200, also recorded in the JSP SDL templates (SD11A), suggests drawing development back and retaining key fields as open space. The potential to reinstate historic orchards has also been identified.</p> <p>Grove Farm forms a prominent cluster of buildings to the west of the village of Backwell and would need to be taken into account in the detailed design/ layout of new development. Of particular concern is the treatment of the main elevation of the existing farm complex that currently looks out onto the rural surrounds. An approach could include maintaining areas of open space within the masterplan, tailoring density and layout to reflect the historic, informal character of the complex.</p>	
8	<p><i>Strategic approach to the assessment, safeguarding and enhancement of greater and lesser horseshoe bat habitat (particularly the Juvenile Sustenance Zone between the A370 and Chelvey Road), and Tickenham; Nailsea and Kenn Moor SSSI interests.</i></p>	<p>HRA is ongoing in respect of this important issue. Bats are a key species in North Somerset and development in this location may have an impact upon the bat SAC.</p> <p>NSC has had ongoing dialogue with Natural England on the approach to assessing and mitigating any impacts arising and it is agreed that a strategic approach is required that takes into account all development proposed, rather than a piecemeal approach. Therefore, an approach that takes into account the wider landscape and network of habitats is proposed rather than a more fragmented approach on a site by site basis.</p> <p>NSC has adopted the <i>North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC Guidance on Development: SPD (2018) WED201</i>. This identifies Juvenile Sustenance Zones as key foraging areas surrounding maternity roosts and consultation bands that indicate density of bat prevalence within. Particular care needs to be given to the sensitive areas, and in this case, the area identified in the criterion. This will be a key consideration in bringing forward land allocation for the SDL and detailed proposals.</p> <p>Further work is in progress to understand the requirements upon the SDLs and this will inform more detailed policy formulation and masterplanning through the Local Plan process.</p>	

9	<p><i>Development should avoid the flood plain and demonstrate reduced run-off rates including through the use of attenuation ponds and other features as appropriate. Additional land may be required off-site to facilitate long term water storage as part of the sustainable drainage strategy.</i></p>	<p>The area of search for the development is outside of the identified fluvial and tidal flood zone. The approach to managing surface water will be integral to the overall environmental/ ecological strategy for the development. The North Somerset levels landscape is a complex system comprising a network of rhyes, and manmade drainage ditches where water drains slowly and through a system of penned gates. This means that onsite storage and source control will be the key to minimising adverse impacts. There are also areas of land to the north of the proposed SDL that fall within flood zone 3b (fluvial) and it will be necessary to ensure no adverse impact upon the functioning of the flood zone. It is considered that GI onsite and water features will be central in holding water and releasing it slowly to the surrounding environment. This can have benefits to wildlife, recreation, placemaking, and the sense of place created.</p> <p>Solutions will be required to ensure satisfactory water quality is achieved including through the application of suitable treatment train techniques that improve the quality of run-off prior to it entering the receiving watercourse. Particular concern is the impact on any run-off into the nearby Kenn SSSI.</p> <p>The off-site requirement indicates a need to potentially provide water storage and this will be investigated as work progresses. Delivery mechanisms for this, if required, will be identified through the Local Plan.</p>	
10	<p><i>Development to be mitigated with the delivery of:</i></p> <p><i>i) new multi-modal link from A370 Long Ashton Bypass to station interchange (including rail crossing), Nailsea SDL and Nailsea town centre, with connection to A370 west of Backwell (including rail crossing) and a new or improved connection to M5;</i></p> <p><i>ii) new MetroBus route linking Bristol to Nailsea from Long Ashton Bypass to the station interchange (including rail crossing), Nailsea SDL and Nailsea</i></p>	<p>These criteria set out the key strategic transport interventions required to facilitate the development.</p> <p>More recent work on transport as published through the Transport Emerging Findings paper, has altered the position on the package of schemes as a result of more in-depth assessment. The proposed changes set out reflect this.</p>	<p>Development to be mitigated with the delivery of:</p> <p>i) new multi-modal link from A370 Long Ashton Bypass to station interchange (including rail crossing), new development area and Nailsea town centre, with connection to A370 west at of Backwell (including rail crossing) and a new or improved connection to M5;</p> <p>ii) new MetroBus route linking Bristol to Nailsea from Long Ashton</p>

<p><i>town centre, and potential onward link to Clevedon;</i></p> <p><i>iii) opportunities to phase delivery of the highway improvements in step with parts of the development may be explored.</i></p>		<p>Bypass to the station interchange (including rail crossing), Nailsea SDL and Nailsea town centre, and potential onward link to Clevedon;</p> <p>iii) opportunities to phase delivery of the highway improvements in step with parts of the development may be explored.</p>
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