



West of England Joint Spatial Plan

Justification of the requirements for the
12 Strategic Development Locations
7.5 Banwell Garden Village



NOVEMBER 2018

Joint Spatial Plan Examination

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

SDL Policy 7.5 Banwell Garden Village

Introduction

1. Strategic development at Banwell Garden Village supports the development of transport improvements along the A38 growth corridor between Weston-super-Mare and Bristol Airport. Banwell and Churchill together are proposed to be supported by a series of strategic transport interventions including the Banwell Bypass and the Sandford and Churchill Bypass, which offer an opportunity for transformational change to existing settlements along this corridor. Banwell Garden Village will provide employment opportunities, services and facilities which complement those in the locality. A successful funding bid for the Banwell Bypass has the potential to accelerate delivery.
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**).
3. This development is being progressed in adherence to garden village principles reflecting the key qualities that represent garden villages (as set out in the *Garden Communities Prospectus*, MHCLG: 2018) including ample green space, clear identity and well-designed places. The North Somerset Local Plan Issues and Options consultation document **WED200** currently defines this development as a free standing new settlement.

	JSP Criteria	Reasoned Justification	Proposed Amendments
1	<i>Delivery of a new garden village to the north west of Banwell with its own character and sense of identity, whilst demonstrating sensitivity to the existing context for around 1900 dwellings including affordable housing.</i>	<p>Submission Document SD11C indicates potential for additional strategic growth at Banwell. Document SD11F provides the call for site submission indicating land availability. Further progress on land assembly has been made and there is landowner/developer interest to bring forward the site.</p> <p>A standard methodology for calculating housing capacity has been used and this is explained in document SD11B, section 5. It is anticipated that further, more detailed work through the Local Plan will refine this informed by more detailed work on 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>Creation of a new local centre to provide a focal point for the new community with an appropriate range of small-scale retail services and facilities to complement existing facilities in Banwell.</i>	<p>A development of this size is expected to generate the demand for a range and scale of local centre type uses including small-scale convenience retail and other community uses. This is considered necessary to support the development of a sustainable community whilst being complementary to the existing range of facilities in the area and is important to create a sense of identity for the new community. The detailed form, scale and composition of the local centre will be determined through the local plan/masterplanning process.</p>	
3	<i>Potential for higher density at the local centre and other accessible locations.</i>	<p>It is a well-established placemaking/urban design principle to provide for higher densities around local centres to support the viability and vitality of the centre and public transport provision and to encourage shorter trips and sustainable development generally. It also has the opportunity to contribute to the sense of place by increasing footfall and activity and this should be taken into account through the urban design process.</p>	
4	<i>Creation of new footpath and cycleways connecting the garden village to Banwell, Weston-super-Mare and the nearby Weston Villages.</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”. This is supported by national policy which requires that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.</p> <p>There are options to connect the existing village and its facilities to the new development with direct and attractive pedestrian/cycle routes, although the M5 to</p>	

		<p>the west forms a significant physical barrier. However, there is potential to investigate an existing M5 bridge crossing from Summer Lane direct into Parklands Village on its eastern edge, thereby avoiding the A371 crossing of the M5. The suitability of this needs to be investigated further.</p>	
5	<p><i>Delivery of bus service improvements to Weston-super-Mare and Bristol including potential for MetroBus.</i></p>	<p>Public transport availability at the SDL is central to supporting sustainable access to services and facilities beyond the garden village. There is potential for a loop route linking from Weston to the Garden Village and back into Weston. This will support the NPPF objective of giving people a real choice about how they travel by increasing the opportunity to make use of sustainable transport modes.</p>	
6	<p><i>Development will not commence until the construction of the Banwell Bypass is delivered as part of the M5 to A38 highway improvements with connection to a new M5 Junction 21a at a location to be confirmed, and onward connection to the Sandford/Churchill Bypass. Opportunities to phase delivery of the highway improvements in step with parts of the development may be explored particularly where delivery of infrastructure is directly within the land controlled by the developer. Development must not prejudice the delivery of future improvements to M5, including the construction of the new M5 junction.</i></p>	<p>The bypass is a safeguarded major transport scheme and is considered critical to the facilitation of the SDL. The Transport Topic Paper (SD16A) highlighted the importance of the bypass to the SDL identifying it as a shortlisted option.</p> <p>Following a successful Expression of Interest bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund, NSC are developing a full business case for the proposal.</p> <p>The submitted JSP wording in relation to the delivery of housing and construction of the Banwell Bypass is potentially confusing. Whilst the Banwell Bypass is required for the development, the intention is for the housing to be delivered in-step with infrastructure delivery with the details to be determined through further transport work and the Local Plan/masterplanning.</p> <p>The Transport Technical Studies WED008 identified that a new M5 J21a is not specifically required to mitigate the SDL, however it is considered a longer-term scheme.</p>	<p><i>Development requires will not commence until the construction of the Banwell Bypass in conjunction with residential development is delivered as part of the M5 to A38 highway improvements with a future connection to a new M5 Junction 21a at a location to be confirmed, and onward connection to the Sandford/Churchill Bypass. Opportunities to phase delivery of the highway improvements in step with parts of the development may be explored particularly where delivery of infrastructure is directly within the land controlled by the developer. Development must not prejudice the delivery of future improvements to M5, including the construction of the new M5 junction.</i></p>
7	<p><i>Local network and junction improvements including widening of Wolvershill Road.</i></p>	<p>Wolvershill Road is the direct route into Worle from the Banwell SDL and is narrow in parts and without footpaths. As it is likely to run through the SDL, it is anticipated that improvements will be required, and its function considered as it is expected to attract additional trips once development has commenced. The North Somerset Local Plan Issues and Options consultation WED200 indicates a local centre being located on</p>	<p><i>Local network and junction improvements including widening of any necessary works to Wolvershill Road as a key feature</i></p>

		<p>Wolvershill Road, and modifications would be required to facilitate accessibility to this and to support sustainable travel provision.</p> <p>As a key route linking Banwell, the new Garden Village and back into Weston, the role and function of this road and any associated modifications needs to be considered comprehensively.</p>	<p><i>associated with the proposed garden village.</i></p>
<p>8</p>	<p><i>Provision of two primary schools one of at least 2.4ha and the other 3.4ha to be located to maximise safe accessibility from surrounding communities by walking and cycling. Provision for a new secondary school to serve the Banwell and Churchill SDL should be made with location to be confirmed through the local plan.</i></p>	<p>NSC use a pupil projection model to inform the schools required on each development based on the estimated population increase and the nature of the housing proposed. The size requirements are the NSC standard for a 420 and 630 place primary school.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p><i>Strategic approach to the assessment, safeguarding and enhancement of greater and lesser horseshoe bat habitat including investigation of the potential to create a ‘dark corridor’ link through the development from open countryside around Stonebridge towards the Grumplepill Rhyne corridor.</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>	

		<p>In addition to addressing these matters on a strategic basis, it is anticipated that each SDL will incorporate features within them that will support bat species as part of a package of mitigation measures. This is likely to include retention of key hedgerows and watercourses – bats are known to follow linear features in the landscape.</p> <p>The reference to ‘dark corridor’ is a specific feature where the illuminance is limited to ensure disturbance is minimised. One such example is being implemented at the adjacent Parklands Village and an opportunity has been identified to link into this, using features within the Banwell SDL (low lying watercourse route) to provide an interconnected habitat linking different developments.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<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 a sustainable drainage strategy.</i></p>	<p>The area of search for the development is outside of the identified flood zone although surface water run-off needs to be considered carefully. 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. Onsite storage and source control is key to minimising adverse impacts. It is considered that integrating green corridors onsite and water features will be central in holding water and releasing slowly to the surrounding environment. This can have benefits to wildlife, recreation and placemaking, and 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 Puxton Moor SSSI.</p> <p>The off-site requirement indicates a need to potentially provide water storage and this will be investigated as work progresses, and any schemes must work with the Banwell Compensation Scheme which is downstream. Delivery mechanisms for this if required will be identified through the Local Plan.</p>	<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 a sustainable drainage strategy. Measures to ensure that water quality and levels on the nearby Puxton Moor SSSI are not adversely impacted must be in place.</i></p>
<p>11</p>	<p><i>Identification of around 5ha of employment land primarily for B8 use class with good access to the M5 and new strategic transport infrastructure.</i></p>	<p>The Strategic Development Location Methodology Paper (November 2017) SD 11B explained the approach to considering employment potential at the SDLs: “for some SDLs where appropriate a standard approach was used for consistency to generate employment hectares and floor space assumptions. These assumptions will be</p>	

		<p>further tested through the local planning process including through Employment Land Reviews to support local plans.”</p> <p>Page 54 of Document SD11A – Strategic Development Location Templates states that “potential for distribution type businesses well connected to the M5 and the new Banwell Bypass. Initial scenario to test for around 5ha of B Class land that could translate to around 15,000sqm.”</p> <p>At an early stage the potential for distribution/ storage type business use was identified given the proximity to the M5 motorway and the new J21a close to the Banwell Garden Village. The Economic Development Needs Assessment (SD 15C) identified the M5 Corridor as performing as a sub-market area within the Functional Economic Market Area with the significance of the M5 to business growth.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p><i>As part of the approach to securing a multi-functional and interconnected green infrastructure, investigate the opportunity for an open setting along the northern edge of the existing village including potential for a nature reserve or other uses, with links out to open countryside to the east.</i></p>	<p>Green infrastructure components are considered to have a key role to play in the garden villages and are likely to account for a considerable percentage of the overall area. National advice encourages local planning authorities to take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure with various sustainability and placemaking benefits.</p> <p>Initial options for the Banwell development are exploring the potential for a free standing but well-connected development to the northwest of the existing village, separate from the existing historic Banwell to retain the separate identity. There are additional reasons why this may be beneficial including in relation to supporting ecological networks to minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with NPPF advice and environmental mitigation, encouraging active lifestyles and placemaking. A nature reserve or other uses could address a range of identified issues and provide a positive use of land. This is further explored in the Council’s Local Plan 2036 Issues and Options consultation document WED200.</p>	
<p>13</p>	<p><i>Implementation of environmental improvements to the centre of Banwell following construction of the Bypass.</i></p>	<p>Strategic development and transport infrastructure provides the opportunity to transform the historic centre of Banwell that currently experiences severe congestion that impacts upon the character and functioning of the village centre. There is considered to be potential for environmental improvements as a consequence of providing the Banwell Bypass and removing the existing extent of peak-time congestion experienced at Banwell. Additional improvements could be secured including public</p>	

		<p>realm improvements that seek to reinforce the historic centre of the village, encourage new investment within the historic core, and reduce the impact of traffic.</p> <p>Opportunities to consider how best these improvements are secured will be pursued, including with development partners.</p>	
14	<i>Safeguarding of the setting of Banwell Conservation Area and protection and enhancement of the settings of listed heritage assets located both within and outside the historic core.</i>	This requirement is supported by national policy and guidance. The protection of historic assets will contribute to the sense of place and ensure any impacts on those features are minimised.	
15	<i>Recognition that there are areas of high potential for archaeology which may require appropriate mitigation, particularly around Stonebridge and Wolvershill, and also between East Street and Riverside.</i>	There is potential for archaeological assets in the area, and this is something that should be assessed further in line with national policy and advice.	
16	<i>Development form, and layout to respect the sensitivity of the location close to the Mendip Hills AONB.</i>	<p>The location is not within or immediately adjacent to the AONB, but the development and masterplanning of the proposal must consider the potential effect development will have within and adjacent to the AONB.</p> <p>It is considered that the specific location, form and layout of development, as well as more detailed design considerations to follow, will be critical aspects in addressing any impacts.</p>	