

Our ref: PORT-SP067* Metrowest 1

Action Points arising from ISH 2

Action Point 1- Consider what energy-efficiency/ micro-generation measures that could be incorporated into the design of Portishead Station and explain how these would be secured

We have discussed this with the Applicant and both parties agree the most appropriate measure would be to install solar panels on the roof of the station building and this can be secured via Requirement 4. This is the most common way that applicants for commercial developments adopt as a means of meeting our policy requirements of providing 10 or 15% of the predicted energy requirements of their developments (dependent on the floor area of the development), unless they have demonstrated that it is not practical or viable to do so.

Action Point 6-To consider further what, if any, concerns they may have if Trinity Footbridge (Work No 7) were to be removed from the application and weight the adverse impacts against the benefits

The LPA considers that the matter of the proposed Trinity footbridge is a matter of balancing a variety of implications rising from the development of the structure.

It is considered that there are moderate adverse impacts on a small number of dwellings in Galingale Way, Peartree Field and Tansy Lane. Of these not all have principal rooms or windows facing the site of the proposed bridge but it is considered that occupants of these properties will be very aware of the large structure in their eyeline from certain parts of their houses and, in at least one case, from their private garden, and with lighting (depending on the specification) this will be the case during daylight hours and hours of darkness to varying degrees. Proposed tree and other planting will have the effect of softening and filtering views of it, but this will take time to mature. The Council has already suggested that due to the importance of the planting it would be preferable to select species and size of stock that has the greatest chance of establishing successfully rather than replanting existing ones, but this will mean it will be shorter and less dense initially.

There may be some impression of it being overbearing due to its combination of elevation and length, which would be more pronounced if fitted with privacy screens to the sides. This would be easier to assess if cross-sectional details through the

bridge and the houses both sides of the lines were available, so our assessment is slightly limited by this. It is considered that for various technical and equalities reasons the bridge cannot be reduced in height or extent. It is possible to mitigate this to a significant degree by using devices such as designing in side panels to the structure, however this is likely to be at the cost of increasing the apparent bulk of the structure. There is a further risk that by screening off views of the ramps and/or steps that it may encourage misuse, anti-social behaviour or vandalism, which will potentially add to the impacts for nearby residents. Based on the submitted information, we are unable to assess whether the bridge will give rise to overshadowing in the absence of daylight and sunlight assessments across the seasons and time of day. It is believed however, that properties to the south of the line are unlikely to suffer significant detriment in this respect. Those north of the line are more likely to do so but the significance of the effect will vary along the frontage of properties due to the varying height of the bridge and ramps and would be more pronounced if side screens are added to the design.

The applicant has provided photomontages of the bridge in its surroundings (attached below) and these are helpful, though they confirm that the addition of side privacy screens may serve to emphasize the bulk in the local views and underline the importance of selecting the best finishing colour as this will also have an influence on its impact. However, we have not placed great reliance to these in assessing the impacts as we are unable to verify their accuracy and they only represent an image of the bridge from the north, so that its impacts there are still difficult to say, with absolute clarity.



It is in addition, a new structure within what ultimately will be a relatively tightly knit urban area and there will be a moderate visual impact in local views in this part of Portishead, where the architectural character is one of modern domestic scale architecture and contemporary mixed use and residential development. To that extent it may be slightly out of character with its surroundings, being a large complex metal structure, though not with the proposed station itself, where such bridges are normal.

The bridge will have some safety benefits and provides for replacement of a longstanding route used by pedestrians to move south and north of the line. It is believed that this is used frequently by some carers and children attending Trinity School, though it is not known how many attend the school from south of the line. We are trying to find out how many attend the school from the southern estates to provide some sense of scale to the issue. There will be some movement across the line by others, but it is believed that much of this will be for less time sensitive informal recreation or leisure rather than journeys to work or shops because of where these destinations are located relative to this route. There is no guarantee that the bridge will be used by carers or whether it will be regarded as an obstacle, particularly for those with other children in pushchairs who will have to negotiate the ramps.

The bridge has been a longstanding feature in the evolving scheme and has been considered an asset to mitigate the severance posed by the re-opening of the line. However, when weighing the benefits against the disadvantages, the benefit would previously have been much clearer when the rail line was proposed to extend further to the west, nearer to the town centre and the station was also intended to be situated further west. Since it was made clear that a level crossing would not be supported by the ORR and the termination of the line and siting of the station to its current position the benefits have become less clear. The view of the ORR is accepted and supported, and we consider that such crossings are no longer appropriate for safety reasons and thus a bridge was an obvious solution.

In the original position, the extent of detour for pedestrians, particularly those visiting the school, would have been clear, adding significantly to cross-line trips. It is now considered that these journey time benefits are more marginal. There remain some disadvantages of pedestrians having to re-route around the station and car park. School-related trips may coincide with peak hour arrivals at the station and they will have to negotiate the station car park entrance or, if taking short cuts across the station forecourt and car park, with attendant safety issues to be addressed. However, it should be possible by design to give priority to pedestrians at the car park entrance and to create a safe environment in the vicinity of the station entrance.

There will be other effects arising from the bridge structure including maintenance liabilities that will fall on the Council, though these are accepted by the Council as a necessity if the bridge is considered to be an essential part of the infrastructure of the re-opened line. The Council is very aware of the risks arising from trespass, which often occurs due to lack of convenient alternative routes. Here, however,

under the scheme as it stands, the inconvenience due to detours are less clear than they may have been initially in the DCO process and this is perhaps less of a worry than it might otherwise have been, but we would suggest Network Rail is consulted for the benefit of its experience in trespass and safety issues.

In conclusion, the view of the Council is that we would expect that the private disadvantages to a relatively small number of households, even if considered moderate to severe might be outweighed by public benefits, such as safety, direct routeing and prevention of severance arising from provision of a bridge, where these are clear and indisputable. However, in this case, it is considered that there are additionally some public disadvantages in the shape of its bulk and intrusion into local views and the benefits of erecting the bridge are now more marginal than they would have been when originally conceived with a more westerly rail terminus and station siting. There are some disadvantages of omitting the bridge from the DCO but these appear to be relatively minor and capable of being addressed.

Action Point 19- Provide further detail on each body's understanding of the allowed freight rail paths from Royal Portbury Dock including those allowed by the planning consent and whether these are different to those allowed by Network Rail

Please see attached report and decision on this matter. I cannot comment on whether this is different to those allowed by Network Rail.



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delegated repor...



11P1893F

decision notice...

Action Point 29-To explain, or signpost where in the application document it was considered, whether the provision of a pedestrian refuge in the centre of Royal Portbury Dock Road during the temporary diversion of the footpath/cycleway was considered and if it was why it was considered unnecessary

In the view of the Council pedestrians will suffer an adverse impact on safety during the construction period. It is accepted that there is some sensitivity around delays to dock related traffic and convenience for entry and exit to these large commercial areas. We would however like to explore the possibility of pedestrian operated mobile temporary traffic signals that will allow pedestrians some dedicated periods to

cross the Royal Portbury Dock Road (as used on the busy A371 at Locking over an extended period of 12-18 months), which would give more assurance about pedestrians' safety. However, if this is considered an expensive proposition, it is still believed from desktop measurements that the carriageway is around 9.22 metres in width which should allow for hgv's on both running lanes (3.4m each) and still allow for provision of a central refuge of 2.0m width, which may be a lower cost option. This would enable pedestrians to make two short crossing decisions rather than having to negotiate the full width of the road or standing with no protection in the centre, given this is considered from evidence at the hearing that this is a popular route. Notwithstanding this, if it is still considered that if this is not feasible then the proposed waiting area either side of the road with warning signs would be some form of benefit.

Action Point 30-To review whether 'reduce speed' / traffic warning signs should be provided on Royal Portbury Dock Road during the period that the footpath/ cycleway would be diverted

See above Action 29. This need not form part of the DCO.

Action Point 31-To review whether Requirement 30 duplicates the need to provide a Construction Workers Travel Plan that would be secured as part of the CTMP in requirement 5. If it would, to consider which mechanism would best deliver the outcome required and amend the dDCO as necessary

There is a degree of duplication between Requirements 5 and 30. It is noted that Highways England has a particular need to avoid adverse impacts on Junction 19 of the M5. It is considered that there are nevertheless other locations where the impacts of construction workers traffic and parking will be of significant interest to North Somerset Council as highway authority, notably the urban location around the station in Portishead and in the constricted roads around the station location in Pill. Requirement 30 as proposed in v4 of the DCO will not address these needs for CWTPs other than around J19. Conversely, Requirement 5 alone *would encompass* the matter of the CWTP within Requirement 30 but given there are numerous other aspects to Requirement 30 that are specific to Highways England and J19. Requirement 5 would become convoluted by inclusion of J19 specific requirements. Thus, it is concluded that it is best to retain both Requirement 5 and 30.

Action points arising from ISH3

Action Point 23-To confirm when the North Somerset Nature Emergency was declared and provide a copy of the action plan.

I was in error, for which I apologise, when in response to the EXA, I quoted the incorrect date when North Somerset Council declared a Nature Emergency and now attach details of the Council motion and the approved minute of the meeting. For clarity, references to the Action Plan at the Hearing, was a reference to the Climate Emergency Action Plan, for which the link is attached below.



Council Motion

Nature Emergen... 10-11-2020 66 ...



Minutes

I have also provided a link to the Council's Strategy and Action Plan for the Climate Emergency, preceded by the Landing page to our Plans for tackling climate change

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/priorities-strategies/climate-emergency/our-plans-tackle-climate-change>

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/North%20Somerset%20climate%20emergency%20strategy%202019.pdf>

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/North%20Somerset%20climate%20emergency%20action%20plan.pdf>

Action Point 31-Provide a location/ layout plan of the proposed affordable housing scheme overlaid with the location of the Ham Green compound

There has not been sufficient time available to provide an overlaid drawing. This requires some assistance that we have not been able to arrange as these may require some technical assistance. I understand that the applicant may be able to provide their CAD files for someone else to do the overlay for say deadline 5 but we would not be comfortable doing the overlay. In the meantime, I have provided copies of the plans supplied to us during the pre-application enquiry submitted by Pill and District Community Land Trust that will hopefully serve to make a comparison with the DCO application. Please let me know whether this is sufficient,

Pre application submission:



Pre application
Application fo...



Red line plan.pdf



site location
plan.pdf



Site layout
plan.pdf

“Council officers were aware of a search for an affordable housing site in and around Pill/Ham Green/Easton-in-Gordano and met with representatives of the CLT early in the search process. The Local Needs Survey was carried out with the assistance of North Somerset Council.

As far as the planning policy position is concerned the Core Strategy policy CS17 for rural exceptions schemes is still extant. This states that rural exception sites will only be permitted in the green belt if very special circumstances are demonstrated. The need for local needs affordable housing has been demonstrated through the local needs survey and a thorough sequential search was carried out first within and then outside the settlement boundary. This elicited only one available site, the pre-app site. Since the need for the affordable housing has been demonstrated and as there are no available sites within the settlement boundary and the village is surrounded by green belt on all sides, then this means that a green belt location is inevitable.

The scale of development proposed is commensurate to the local need, it is adjacent to a service village so deemed a sustainable location. Local facilities are either nearby (recreational facilities, pub, secondary school, employment uses at Eden Business Park all at Ham Green), or in the centre of Pill which is accessible via a footpath/cycleway across Watch House Hill (1km), or via bus from Pill Road approximately 0.5km).

The site is allocated in the draft Pill and District Neighbourhood Plan as a site for affordable housing. The plan has just commenced [community consultation](#) (today), but this will run for an indefinite period until restrictions have been lifted. Following this consultation the plan will be amended then submitted to NSC for additional consultation then examination and referendum. The Plan will is therefore at an early stage of preparation so the policy has no formal weight. It is however an indication of support for the proposal locally.

North Somerset Council Adopted Core Strategy Policy CS17: Rural exceptions schemes – includes the following concluding sentence:

“Rural exceptions schemes will be acceptable adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Service Villages and Infill Villages and elsewhere adjacent to the main body of the settlement, but not in the Green Belt unless justified by very special circumstances.”

Note: The Core Strategy predates the latest NPPF (See NPPF heading and attachment towards the end of this email)

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Neighbourhood Plan:

Specific reference to the site is made on pages 14 to 19 (included reference to policy on page 19)



neighbourhood...

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December Executive:

At the December meeting of North Somerset Council's Executive meeting it was agreed the Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan can go forward to examination. Presenting the report, Cllr James Tonkin, executive member for planning, highways and transport, said the plan will be decided by an independent examiner in the spring. Before then there will be a six-week consultation in the new year with all comments sent to the examiner for consideration. Council Leader and ward member for Pill, Cllr Don Davies, said producing the plan, which covers two parishes, had been a "real community effort" involving over 100 people. See the report for more details.

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NPPF



NPPF_Feb_2019...

Par 145 - Point (f) of the NPPF refers to Exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt:

"A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

(f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); "

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It is the view of officers that there is no land use policy objection in principle to delivering 100% affordable housing in respect of this particular Green Belt site under the Rural Exceptions policy subject to overcoming any ecology / historic policy issues, highways and drainage considerations that may be relevant to the Chapel Pill site..

I have also attached two further documents:

1. the compound plan provided by the applicant. This is the ExA's Doc ref APP-040.

This plan has not changed since the submission of the DCO App.



245 to 246 Ham
Green Highway...

2. a document provided for consultation with the community on the affordable housing proposal which commenced yesterday. This explains the relationship



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with the Metrowest compound access proposal.

Action Point 32-To submit details of the location of any further sites that parties think that the Examining Authority (ExA) should visit on either an accompanied or an unaccompanied basis including reasons as to why they need to be visited and if they need to be on an accompanied basis how this could be done given the current COVID-19 restrictions

We do not wish to add anything on this.

Action Point 33-To provide written consent for the ExA to access the disused track in order to be able to carry out an Unaccompanied Site Inspection

We have discussed this with the applicant, who will respond on this point.

Action Point 34-To submit post hearing submissions including written summaries of any oral cases put at any of the hearings

We have no further submissions to make in this respect.

DCO version 4

We do not wish to make any further comment on the draft DCO version 4.

Kind regards

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**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL
DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION
REPORT SHEET**

Target Date: 06 December 2011

Application No. [REDACTED] **Application Type:** Full Planning Permission
Case Officer: [REDACTED]

Proposal: Variation of Condition 16 of planning permission 99/0737 (Construction of rail link, field north of Pill, south of M5 bridge, Easton-in-Gordano) to allow the number of freight trains using the rail link not to exceed an average of 20 trains daily per calendar year, in and out of the port, and not during any time when the Bristol to Portishead railway branch line is in use for scheduled passenger services and shall not exceed one train per hour in each direction.

Location: Rail Link (Bristol-Royal Portbury Dock, Field north of Pill/south of M5 bridge,

The planning application is accompanied with the following details:

- Transport Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Design & Access Statement
- Noise Statement

Planning History/Background – most recent applications

Planning Permission was granted in 2000 (Ref: 99/0737) for the "Construction of Rail Link, field north of Pill, south of M5 Bridge, Easton-in-Gordano" Condition 16 states that : *"The number of freight trains using the rail link shall not exceed an average of ten trains daily per calendar year in the out of the Port."*

Monitoring Details (if applicable)

N/A

Policy Framework

Development Plan

Joint Replacement Structure Plan (RSP)

Policy 1 Sustainable development

North Somerset Replacement Local Plan 2007

Policy GDP/1 Preferred locations for development

Policy GDP/2 Environment and public protection

Policy T/10 Safely, traffic and infrastructure and associated development.

Other Material Policy Guidance

RPG: 10
Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

Relevant guidance is contained in the following PPG's:

PPS 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth. The statement dated 2009 is accompanied with practice guidance notes on need, impact and the sequential approach.

PPG13: Transport contains the government's advice on transport and land use planning and promotes sustainable transport choices to reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

Emerging Planning Policy

North Somerset Core Strategy (Publication Version) 2011.

The draft Core Strategy was subject to public consultation between November 2009 and February 2010. Following this, a 'Key Changes Document' was produced and consulted on in October/November 2010. In January 2011, the Core Strategy 'publication version' was issued and was subject to a 6-week consultation period. In July the Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination with hearings taking place in November/December 2011. The Council expects to receive feedback from the Local Plan Inspector in the first quarter of 2012.

The Core Strategy is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation and is a material consideration, but because its draft policies are currently being considered at examination, they have limited weight and could be subject to change. The following draft policies do however apply to this proposal.

Affordable Housing (if applicable)

N/A

Consultation Summary

Copies of representations received can be viewed on the council's website. This report contains summaries only.

Network Rail: Support Planning Application

Highways Agency: No comments

EHO: No objections

Parish/Town Comments

Pill & Easton in Gordano Parish Council:

Councillors objected to the variation, on the grounds of increased disturbance to residents, particularly in view of the existing night time usage of the line.

Neighbour's Views

3 letters of objection have been received in connection with the above application.

The principal planning points made are as follows:

- Noise during day and night
- Impact on living conditions

Planning Issues

This proposal is a request to vary Condition 16 of planning permission 99/0737 granted in 2000. The planning application was needed in 2000 because the original line built the nineteenth century didn't link into Portbury Dock so the Bristol Port Company had to build a short section of new line, between the Dock and the edge of Pill (Portbury Dock Junction), when they re-opened the freight line in 2002.

The LPA can only have regard to the planning issues as they relate to the application site outlined in red. The length of track in question is 400 metres long and runs from the Portbury Docks, under the M5 Avon Bridge and up to the west boundary of the village of Pill.

The remainder of the track (6 miles in length) is under the control and ownership of Network Rail. Network Rail (as owner/operator) has statutory rights given by Government under the GPDO, as Statutory Undertakers to development activities on their operational land. Any concerns about scheduling and train movements on their operational land is a matter for Network Rail and not the LPA.

The reason for the application is that the Port Company are diversifying into the bio-mass market, mainly as a result of the reduced demand for coal following the closure of coal fired power stations. The bio-mass market is a very considerable business opportunity and the volume of bio-mass freight is expected to be considerably greater than the volume of coal freight handled by the port.

The Port Authority provides a business case for Network Rail to undertake a maintenance renewal programme on the line at a cost of approx £10m. Network Rail has programmed this for implementation in 2012/13. The main elements of this are the rebuilding of the track formation and drainage and emergency measures through Pill tunnel. Without the freight train business (for which Network Rail receive an income in line access charges) the cost of upgrading Pill tunnel would fall upon the Portishead Passenger rail project, i.e. increase the project cost from £40 to £50m.

The existing freight train movements vary from day to day and by season to season. Currently there is an average of 5 trains per day that operate in each direction. Approximately 30% of the freight trains operate at night.

The expansion of movements to 20 trains in each direction per day raises issues regarding the proposed re-opening of Portishead Passenger Rail Line, which would share the existing freight line to Portbury Junction and re-introduce to 4 mile section of track to Portishead.

The Council have investigated the capacity limitations of the line with Network Rail in the 2010 GRIP3 study and report. A number of input assumptions were discussed at workshops. In respect of freight train operations it was agreed to allow for 1 freight train per hour in each direction 24/7, as part of the base assumptions. In respect of passenger train operations a total of 6 options were agreed, 4 involving an hourly service and 2 involving a half hourly service.

Between Parson Street junction (Bristol) and Portbury Dock junction the freight line is a single track line. In order to operate both freight and passenger trains, the line needs to be upgraded to increase the line operating speed. Network Rail modelled the freight train paths together with the 6 passenger train options using industry software (RailSys). This work identified the specific rail infrastructure requirements for each of the 6 options and also identified that freight trains would have to operate at higher speed through Pill.

The conclusion of this research is that expanding freight train movements from 10 to 20 trains in each direction would not cause us any problems with the delivery and operation of a re-open Portishead line.

A recommended condition will require that freight trains are limited to one train per hour in each direction, per day. In that respect the maximum number of freight trains that could be operated on the line without causing a problem for Portishead Rail, 24 trains in each direction per day i.e. one per hour, every hour is acceptable.

The line speed through Pill may also need to be increased although the line speed is currently 20mph but freight trains operate a voluntary 10mph through Pill to appease local residents in relation to noise.

The need for the increased freight train speed doesn't relate to the 'new' section of line so is not something that this planning permission would need to concern. This is a matter for Network Rail. Network Rail has suggested that higher freight train speed doesn't necessarily mean greater noise. This would be an issue for the Portishead Rail scheme to address through public consultation as the scheme progresses in addition to the need to have further discussions on construction works for the Portishead Rail scheme requiring some line closures and disruption to freight train operations.

Noise Assessment

As part of the planning application in 1999, an EIA was undertaken that endeavoured to establish the impact of noise generated by rail movements on properties in Pill. The nearest threat to threshold was night time pass-by at Avon Road, Pill that came within 5dB of the 63dB threshold. The two concerns were:

- engine noise and
- rail/wheel contact noise

As a result, the noise control measures carried out in 2003 and since have been:

- Lubrication
- New wagons
- Speed restriction

- Efficient locomotives

No conditions were imposed on the 1999 concern relating to noise levels and there is no reason to change that assessment in 2011.

The noise intensity of noise associated with one pass-by movement will not increase, (in fact the noise is likely to decrease as a result of improved rolling stock) but what will increase will be the number of by-pass trains within 24 hours.

The three objections received from local residents (as reflected in the objection for the Parish Council) relate to the noise of train activity. In this regard, local residents can call the Network Rail National Helpline about noise caused from train speed and engineering & maintenance work etc. Network Rail's Community Relations Team will explain the reason for the noise and if appropriate, they will investigate the problem and take appropriate action. If residents call the National Helpline about noise from other sources, such as trains, train horns, track alarms & level crossing, Network Rail can provide advice and refer to the train operating companies Freightliner & DBS.

Robin Basu, the new Community Relations Manager for Network Rail has suggested that his target is to resolve all complaints within 20 days. Further, any complaints by email or in writing are logged into their system and acknowledged together with a reference number within 48 hours of receipt. More importantly Robin Basu is happy to talk about this issue at a future Pill Liaison Meeting.

Transport Assessment

To transport the wood pellet to the regional power stations will involve either HGV movements by road or the use of rail transport. Each train is likely to carry around 1200 tonnes of pellets whilst the alternative movements by HGV would require some 48 movements onto Junction 19 of the M5 to the detriment of highway efficiency. The increased freight movements will result in no additional road traffic on the adjoining road network. The use of sustainable rail transport objectives is consistent with policies in the Local Plan and Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy (Publication Version) that encourages and supports an improved and integrated transport network and allows for a wide choice of modes of transport as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities.

In addition, conditions imposed on the planning consent will safeguard the future introduction of passenger services to and from Portishead.

Planning Obligations

In terms of a possible S106 contribution (as suggested by some members), it is important to point to the following context. The re-opening of the freight line was funded by Bristol Port Company and a DfT grant. So from the Port's point of view they have already made a significant financial contribution, and it's certainly the case that had the freight line not been re-opened, then the cost of re-opening the Portishead Passenger Rail line would be a lot more than £40m. Under the circumstances, having regard to the CIL tests and the fact most of the rail line is operated by Rail Track, it would be unreasonable to seek a S106 contribution taking all factors into account,

including the fact that the application site relates to just a short section of line approaching the dock gates.

In terms of wider environmental impacts, a balance needs to be struck between the benefits from avoiding the huge increase in HGV that would be needed, as previously suggested and the additional noise resulting from the additional trains.

Conclusions

In connection with the revision of condition 16 of the above planning consent, the LPA can only have regard to the narrow issue as it relate to the application site outlined in red. The noise concerns raised by local residents seem to relate to the section of line that is managed by Network Rail. Nevertheless, the Port Authority is prepared to discuss the operation of future freight activity with Rail Track at future Pill Liaison Meetings. Overall, expanding freight train movements from 10 to 20 trains in each direction would not cause us any problems with the delivery of the passenger line, and in terms of wider environmental impacts, a balance needs to be struck between the benefits from avoiding the huge increase in HGV at J19 M5 and the additional movements by rail. It is regarded that the proposal is in accordance with sustainable policies contained in the Local Plan.

Recommendations

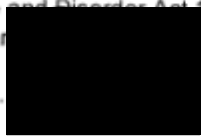
(Including consideration of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 & the Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

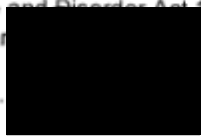
See decision notice for conditions/reasons

APPROVE with conditions

Reason for Overriding Parish Council comments (if appropriate) (see conclusion)

In recommending this application, I have taken into consideration the relevant policies of the Development Plan and the comments made by the consultees and other interested parties and the:

- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Human 

Signed: 

Dated:..... 02/12/11

Authorised by:

Dated:.....

NOTICE OF DECISION
Town and Country Planning Act 1990



The Bristol Port Company
St Andrews House
St. Andrews Road
Avomouth
Bristol
BS11 9DQ

Application Number
Category

Full Planning
Permission

Application No: [REDACTED]

Applicant: The Bristol Port Company

Site: Rail Link (Bristol-Royal Portbury Dock, Field north of Pill/south of M5 bridge,
Description: Variation of Condition 16 of planning permission 99/0737 (Construction of rail link, field north of Pill, south of M5 bridge, Easton-in-Gordano) to allow the number of freight trains using the rail link not to exceed an average of 20 trains daily per calendar year, in and out of the port, and not during any time when the Bristol to Portishead railway branch line is in use for scheduled passenger services and shall not exceed one train per hour in each direction.

North Somerset District Council in pursuance of powers under the above mentioned Act hereby **GRANTS CONSENT** for the above development in accordance with the plans and particulars received and subject to the following condition(s):-

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved details: Drawing No. 37576A and letter from the applicant dated 28 November 2011.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning

- 3 The number of freight trains using the Rail Link, hereby approved, shall not exceed an average of 20 trains daily per calendar year, in and out of the Portbury Docks, and not during any time when the Bristol to Portishead railway branch line is in use for scheduled passenger services and shall not exceed one train per hour in each direction.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the future opening of the Portishead to Bristol line in accordance with Policy T/3 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.

- 4 The Local Planning Authority shall be notified, in writing by the applicant, when condition (3) has been implemented, that is to say, when the average number of train movements (per calendar year) exceed 10 trains per day.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority wishes to monitor the effects of the development on the surrounding community in accordance with Policy GDP/2 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.

- 5 There shall be no discharge of foul or contaminated drainage or traffic effluent from the track into either groundwater or an surface waters, whether direct or via soakaways.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the environment in accordance with Policy GDP/2 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL AND ADVICE NOTES

Reasons for approval:

The proposed intensification of the existing rail link is acceptable in sustainable terms and is consistent with Policies GDP/1, T/1 and T3 of the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan.

Advice notes:

The applicant is encouraged, when the passenger line is constructed and opened, to co-operate with North Somerset Council and Network Rail on co-ordinating line maintenance, management and temporary closures plans.

The applicant is encouraged to work in partnership with the local community and assist Network Rail, through regular liaison meetings, in resolving complaints about rail movements particularly at night.

Date: 02 December 2011

Signed 
Director of Development & Environment

Please contact  if you require any further information regarding this decision.

The Nature Emergency

North Somerset Council acknowledges and notes:

1. That in February 2019, the council declared a climate emergency, as have over two-thirds of local authorities nationally;
2. The ecological emergency, noting specifically species extinction, loss of habitat and the connectivity of habitats, decline in pollinators which are crucial to food supply, and the loss of and decline in the quality of the soil;
3. That the climate and ecological emergencies are linked and both are the result of overexploitation of the earth's resources and poor land management. However, there are other causes of the ecological emergency beyond climate change, including other forms of pollution, urbanisation, hydrological change, the proliferation of invasive species, and poor practices in agriculture, woodland management and fishing;
4. That in May 2019, the UN Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) raised the alarm about the urgent ecological emergency the world faces. The UK's State of Nature 2019 report also highlights the critical decline in biodiversity in the UK.

The council further believes that:

1. The survival of our society and economy depend absolutely on the health of the natural environment and ecosystems and the services they provide, for example clean water and air, food, and flood protection;
2. While reducing carbon from fossil fuels is the top priority for tackling the climate emergency, it is also necessary to find ways to increase carbon absorption or sequestration by the natural environment, by for example tree planting, peatland restoration, different methods of land management and improved agricultural practices that enable carbon to be drawn down into the soil on a large scale;
3. Throughout the district of North Somerset, there are opportunities to increase the sequestration of carbon by trees, grassland and soil, but further work is needed to:
 - Increase biodiversity and protection of habitats and species, including key pollinators and other insects
 - Increase soil quality and quantity, reducing chemical fertilisers and pesticides and preventing soil erosion

- Increase local food production, utilising local productive capacity, through less intensive agricultural methods, as a number of local producers already do
- Increase flood defences using natural flood mitigation measures
- Protect our natural landscape and protect and enhance the associated ecosystems, whilst enabling sensitive development and more people to enjoy the benefit of time spent in nature

Therefore, in addition to the work already underway to address the climate emergency, this council formally declares an ecological emergency and resolves to:

1. Promote the policy as “tackling the climate and nature emergencies”;
2. Whilst recognising the ongoing consultation regarding the new local plan, one of the aims of the local plan should be to achieve a biodiversity net gain;
3. Use existing planning policy and development management to ensure biodiversity is improved, environments enriched and the destruction of habitats is resisted when development occurs. This could be achieved through development of a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);
4. Seek to work actively with partners locally in North Somerset, regionally in the West of England and beyond to drive collaborative action to improve biodiversity;
5. Identify areas within North Somerset which could be suitable for habitat restoration and seek to restore them through the council’s emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy, due in April 2021;
6. Seek opportunities to promote local produce and reduce the intensity of agriculture of North Somerset through engagement with businesses and farmers;
7. Encourage residents, businesses and landowners to reduce pesticide use, and seek to become a pesticide-free council;
8. Continue to collaborate with our communities, businesses and other organisations such as schools and colleges to improve ecological knowledge and understanding and to encourage more sensitive land management.

Draft Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Council

Tuesday, 10th November 2020

held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 pm Meeting Concluded: 7.40 pm

Councillors:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Vacancy

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Officers in attendance: [REDACTED] (Chief Executive), [REDACTED] (Director of Place), [REDACTED] (Interim Director of Finance and Property), [REDACTED] (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), [REDACTED] (Corporate Services), [REDACTED] (Corporate Services), [REDACTED] (Corporate Services), [REDACTED] (Corporate Services), [REDACTED] (Corporate Services)

COU Chairman's Introduction

116

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this virtual meeting of the Council.

COU Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest (Standing Order 37)
117 (Agenda Item 4)

None

COU Open and Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 September 2020
118 (Agenda Item 5)

Resolved: that the open and exempt minutes be approved as a correct record.

COU Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)

119 The Nature Emergency (Councillors [REDACTED]) (Agenda Item 6 (1))

Motion: Moved by [REDACTED] and seconded by [REDACTED]

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Seven members signalled their support for a debate on the Motion.

██████████ spoke in support of his Motion and urged all members to support it. ██████████ as seconder then spoke in support of the Motion and the need for urgent action.

In debating the Motion councillors expressed their support for the actions proposed and referred to the many and wide ranging benefits of tackling both the climate and nature emergencies together. Reference was made to the need to update and enforce certain action plans and policies to ensure they were consistent with the objective of tackling the climate and nature emergencies, and to the importance of securing inter-generational buy-in and community ownership of these measures.

██████████ declared an interest in this matter as a member of the National Farmers Union.

Following the debate it was

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COU Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 8)

120

The Chairman referred to the low key Armistice Day commemorations taking place this year and reported that a train would be travelling from the West of England to Paddington on 11 November, collecting wreaths from local communities at stations on route following which these wreaths would be displayed on the war memorial at Paddington station. He reported that the Vice-Chairman would be handing over a wreath at Yatton Station on behalf of this council and as Chairman he would be laying a wreath at a war memorial in Clevedon.

COU Leader's announcements (Agenda Item 9)

121

The Leader drew members' attention to the letter he had circulated to councillors at the weekend updating them on the latest position on the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) negotiations. Following negotiations with fellow unitary authorities (UAs), the Metro Mayor and Ministers on the council's application to join WECA, Ministers had asked the four UAs to initiate a public consultation to run in parallel with financial and powers discussions with MHCLG and Treasury, with a view to presenting a deal to all four UAs for agreement in January. To progress the application it was necessary for all UAs to start and conclude consultations by the end of November in order to meet government timescales for introducing legislation. However Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees had been unwilling to commence consultations at this time therefore the council's application was stymied until at least 2025. He stated this was hugely disappointing due to the adverse impact on funding for infrastructure and skills investments within North Somerset but he assured members that the council would continue discussions with Ministers and consider all future options including any opportunities presented by the Devolution White Paper anticipated in the Spring.

With reference to the current lockdown the Leader thanked all residents for the sacrifices they were making to protect their local communities and thanked staff and contractors for the work they were doing to support residents and communities through this difficult period.

COU Chief Executive's announcements (Agenda Item 10)
122

The Chief Executive referred to the recent webinar held on 5 November providing an update on Covid 19. If any member had missed the webinar but would like to view it she could send them the link if they contacted her.

COU Forward Plan dated 2 November 2020 (Agenda Item 11)
123

██████████ presented the Forward Plan.

Resolved: that the forward plan be noted.

COU Corporate Parenting Responsibilities (Agenda Item 13)
124

██████████ presented the report. She asked members to review the survey results and consider whether these would be good enough for their own children and what aspects of the survey they would like to know more about. She assured members that as Executive Member she was working closely with the Young People's Champions to address the issues identified within the survey.

Members welcomed the report and in discussing the survey results reference was made to the key findings and areas that could be improved. Reference was made to the webinar on corporate parenting responsibilities attended by councillors some months back where councillors had been asked to provide suggestions on how they could assist and members asked what progress had been made to date on implementing these. Whilst recognising that some suggestions could not be progressed at the current time due to Covid 19 restrictions it was agreed that the list be revisited to identify what actions could be progressed immediately. Members noted individual actions that had been taken by members to provide support to children and young people in care.

With reference to the information provided in the report it was suggested this should be benchmarked and provided in a standardised format which would facilitate regular monitoring. In noting the low proportion of young people who retained the same social worker during the year, reference was made to the importance of building long term relationships and it was suggested this should be given greater priority.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU Question Time (Standing Order No. 18) (Agenda Item 14)
125

Advance written questions were received from councillors in advance of the meeting and, together with any advance responses received, were circulated

to councillors and published on the website. Full details together with the responses to them are contained in Appendix 1.

COU 126 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto: Avon Fire Authority (Agenda Item 18 (1))

██████████ presented the report.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU 127 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto: Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel (Agenda Item 18(2))

██████████ presented the report.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU 128 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto: West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 18 (3))

██████████ presented the report. He stressed the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee fully recognised the benefits for the region of North Somerset Council joining WECA and had urged all Mayors and Leaders to do everything possible to bring this about. It was therefore disappointing that this approach had not been supported by the Bristol Mayor. He suggested this would prevent North Somerset accessing adult skills funding for training in advanced digital skills and would have a pronounced impact on transport at a time when this was urgently needed. He stressed that urgent action was needed to address this now.

In discussing the issues reference was made to the serious economic disruption that would be faced over coming months which would be exacerbated if the council missed out on funding and job creation opportunities. Members urged all councillors to engage with colleagues in other authorities to try and progress this and secure a better deal for the region. Members expressed their disappointment and frustration at the position adopted by the Mayor of Bristol suggesting this would have a significant impact on local residents and the region's economy for years to come. The Leader noted the strength of feeling expressed by members but explained the difficulties now posed due to the time constraints around the timetable for introducing legislation. He undertook to engage directly with Ministers to progress this in whatever way possible and to continue to work with WECA partners for the benefit of North Somerset and the region.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

COU 129 MetroWest Phase 1 Update – Programme and Procurement (Agenda Item 19)

██████████ presented the report. He referred to the challenges as a result of delays to the project brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic and

thanked officers for their work on this project. He drew members' attention to the revised estimated opening date of December 2024, the proposals for seeking to claw back some of the time delays, the key risk exposure to the council and mitigating actions to reduce this wherever possible. He highlighted section 12 of the report setting out the key project risks and how these would be managed.

At the request of a member and having regard to the length and complexity of the report [REDACTED] undertook to provide a one page summary to members explaining the following: the reasons for the nine month delay; what this has added to the cost, timescales and scope; the change in and resultant potential risk exposure to the council; action being taken to get back on track. He also agreed to provide further detail in relation to the number of jobs to be created for younger people and opportunities for apprenticeships provided by local colleges.

Motion: [REDACTED] and

Resolved:

(1) that it be noted that the Development Consent Order (DCO) examination for MetroWest Phase 1 has commenced five months later than expected at the point of when the DCO Application was submitted in November 2019, causing a knock-on delay to the overall delivery programme timescales, as indicated in figure 1.1. of the report. Officers from North Somerset Council (NSC) and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) are working with senior colleagues at Network Rail and the Department for Transport on solutions to mitigate this projected time delay;

(2) that it be noted that the above time delay is one of five key strategic risks that have been reported previously. Figure 1.1. of the report profiles these strategic risks against the project programme prior to any mitigation. Senior officers are working closely with senior colleagues at Network Rail and the Department of Transport to mitigate these risks which will inform timely decisions to be brought forward to the respective NSC, West of England (WoE) and WECA decision making bodies for approval, following full scrutiny engagement;

(3) that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise the project Delivery and Procurement Strategy together with the Chief Executive of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) be approved, as per the June 2020 WoE report, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, the Director of Development and Environment, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Finance and Property. The guiding principles of the project Delivery and Procurement Strategy are set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report;

(4) that authority be delegated to the Director of Development and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Finance and Property, to enter into a side agreement with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) in relation to cost, risk and liability sharing arising from NSC entering into agreements with statutory undertakers (mostly utility

companies), for works to divert, protect and create new connections. The guiding principles of the side agreement are set out in paragraph 7.10 of the report; and

(5) that authority be delegated to the Director of Development & Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Finance and Property, to enter into agreements with statutory undertakers for works to divert, protect and create new connections, including the following companies:

- I. Bristol Water
- II. CLH Pipeline System (CLH-PS) Limited
- III. Wales and West Utilities
- IV. Wessex Water
- V. Western Power Distribution
- VI. National Grid Electricity Transmission
- VII. Bristol Port Company

COU Constitution Changes to Delegations (Agenda Item 20)

130

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the report.

Motion: [REDACTED] and

Resolved: that the changes to the Constitution referenced in the report be approved and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to implement them.

COU Draft Municipal Calendar 2021-22 (Agenda Item 21)

131

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the report.

Motion: [REDACTED] and

Resolved: that the draft Municipal Calendar for 2021/22 be approved.

Chairman

Appendix 1

Council Meeting, 10 November 2020 Question Time (agenda item 14)

1. Question from [REDACTED] Leader of the Council

“In a previous executive Q&A, the Executive responded to one of my residents who is profoundly deaf who asked whether executive facebook live sessions, alongside council meetings could invest in live-captioning and BSL interpretation. One of the gifts of lockdown is that it has given us remote meetings, which make the use of BSL interpretations much easier and more financially feasible.

(i) Could North Somerset please look into making our newly live streamed meetings more accessible by providing post-event captioning, live captioning, and or BSL interpretation so that we can commit to being an open and fair council for all?

(ii) And if my resident sent advanced notice, requesting such provisions for all future such meetings, would we be bound by the equality act to do so anyway?”

Response from [REDACTED]

(i) The council is currently reviewing the three possible forms of assistance that provide a greater level of accessibility to online meetings for those who have difficulty hearing:

1. Live transcription of the meeting using a British sign language interpreter
2. Utilising closed captions as provided by Teams or Google
3. Live captions generated in real time by a typist

Live transcription using an interpreter can be achieved either as a direct participant in a Teams meeting, or as a separate video feed mixed into the video stream prior to streaming. Such assistance is extremely effective. The interpreter can either be present in the room in the case of a CEO briefing session or provide services remotely as a participant in a Teams meeting. The council already possesses the technology to deliver both solutions and there are interpreters available to undertake this work who would previously have been booked for face to face meetings.

We have previously experimented using closed captions generated automatically by Microsoft Teams. Whilst this technology makes a brave attempt at producing a transcript of the meeting in real time, there are times when it makes mistakes, particularly in relation to people’s names. This has previously resulted in potential embarrassment to both officers and councillors, and, as a result, the solution has not been explored further. This solution does however offer the advantage of being readily available at no additional cost or overhead.

Live captioning achieved through the use of a typist is more of a challenge for the council to implement given that it does not already have the equipment required to overlay a feed of captions to a meeting stream. Whilst this is a one-off investment, the ongoing cost of the typist must also be considered and will require budget growth to support.

Closed captions can also be generated by Google through the YouTube web stream. The council does not have sufficient subscribers to its YouTube channel in order to qualify for live streaming however closed captions generated after the meeting represent the current approach adopted by the council whilst other options are considered. The disadvantage of having captions generated post-event however is obviously that it does not allow real-time involvement in the meeting. Council meetings however are streamed as a one-way broadcast; there is no means by which any member of the public can participate in the meeting in terms of making a representation other than by submitting a written disposition in advance.

(ii) The council is obliged by the Equality Act, so far as is reasonably practicable, to approximate the access enjoyed by disabled people to that enjoyed by the rest of the public. The purpose of the duty to make reasonable adjustments is to provide access to a service as close as it is reasonably possible to get to the standard normally offered to the public at large.

In considering what constitute *reasonable adjustments*, the council must consider such questions as

- The extent to which it is practicable for us to implement the adjustment;
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustment;
- The extent of any disruption which taking the steps would cause;
- The extent of the service provider's financial and other resources;
- The amount of any resources already spent on making adjustments; and
- The availability of financial or other assistance.

Collectively the meetings of the Council, its panels and committees consume on average around 15 hours per month over ten months of the year. Calculating on the basis of £150/hour for interpretation or typist services, this would cost the council approximately £23k. It would provide Deaf and hearing-impaired people with the required standard of service set out in the Equality Act and enjoyed by hearing people. This should be judged against the cost previously paid for interpreters etc at face to face meetings with North Somerset customers. A meeting could typically cost around the same.

The council's next steps will be to investigate the practical issues (eg suitability of IT services, availability of interpreters), to determine if the interpretation and captioning services can be delivered and so seen to be reasonable.

2. Question from [REDACTED], Leader of the Council

"How many of North Somerset Council's employees, and employees contracted by North Somerset Council earn the Real Living Wage (£9.30 per hour), and what would the cost implications be of North Somerset Council tackling inequalities by becoming a Real Living Wage Employer?"

Response from [REDACTED]

In respect of the living wage we only have one spinal point that is less than £9.30, it is £9.25 (excluding apprentices). There are three people on this spinal point (excluding schools) and all three will be in receipt of increments that will increase their salary above that amount by February 2021. The three will increase to £9.43 when the increments are applied.

Supplementary Question asked at the meeting

██████████ welcomed the leadership being shown by the Council but in a supplementary question referred to the number of people trapped in low paid jobs and asked the Leader if partners and contractors could be encouraged by the council to pay all their employees the Real Living Wage.

██████████ responded that whilst the council could urge contractors to pay the Real Living Wage it had no direct control over this but he suggested it may be appropriate to ask scrutiny to look at the council's policy in this area to determine whether this could be strengthened.

3. Question from ██████████, Executive Member for Communities, Tourism and Leisure

"Hutton Moor Leisure Centre continues to be affected by unlawful encampments on their car park and it's a very sensitive area as the leisure centre is well used by the community. Over the last 18 months I'm aware of at least 6 occasions when this has happened. On most occasions we've started the court process and on one occasion had to use enforcement agents. All of this costs in terms of time, legal fees, resources and lost revenue.

The entrance to Hutton Moor is one of the areas of vulnerability and needs to be seriously looked at to see if improvements can be made. Surely it will cost us less in the long term to make changes - such as a height barrier - than it would be to continue with this cycle of eviction.

When Melrose car park had issues with encampments a better barrier was put it. Why is Hutton Moor being ignored and when will improvements be made? Lockdown would be the optimum time to make any changes to the entrance. Will you commit to making these changes?"

Response from ██████████

I am aware Hutton Moor is regularly a target for travellers; and this year alone there have been at least 4 unauthorised encampments on site and currently we have travellers on site. This leaves us with a mess to clear and challenges for staff and costs thousands of pounds.

Over the years a number of schemes to prevent the travellers accessing the site have been installed, bunding and posts, but these just stop travellers driving onto the pitches. The car park is now the issue, and again in the past different schemes to prevent access to the carpark have been looked at, but due to the site needing to allow access for delivery vehicles, coaches and work vans (customers), without causing a back up on the road; the scheme is not as straight forward as hoped and has always stopped.

This situation cannot continue, so I have now asked the leisure manager and her team to look at this as a priority (which was already in place), and investigate different options and obtain some quote for the works, we will then look at moving forward.

4. Question from [REDACTED], Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

"There has been huge public concern about the failure of central government to provide free school meals during half term, a decision which fortunately has now been revoked for Christmas. Many local councils including NS stepped up to the mark last week, by publishing local businesses who offered free meals and giving out back up phone numbers for families unable to access this support. I understand this back up support from NS was funded by our Welfare Provision Scheme.

However, when I tested this system myself by phoning the call centre numbers published by us, the results were disappointing. The information I got was ill informed and not adequate, the only offer given to me was for food bank vouchers. I was subsequently told by officers that Tesco vouchers or even cash handed out in the Town Hall should also have been offered.

This highlighted that for families in rural locations such as my ward, support via our WPS is very difficult to access, especially currently when travel by public transport is discouraged. Our nearest food bank is either Cheddar or Weston. I have suggested to explore including Coop vouchers in the options on offer, as Coop stores can be found in most villages. Also to ensure that call centre operatives are adequately trained. Please can I be reassured that this will be pursued?"

Oral response from [REDACTED] provided at the meeting.

[REDACTED] responded that whilst the poor response received by [REDACTED] was unfortunate it was not typical, with feedback from other users being more positive. She stated managers had now looked into the matter and would ensure more comprehensive training was given to new call centre staff to ensure they provided accurate information and could signpost callers as appropriate. She added that the reason why Co-op vouchers were not offered as an option was because they could be used to purchase a wide range of goods and were not restricted to food items. It was noted this matter had been raised with the Co-op by other authorities too and that they were currently looking into this.

5. Question from [REDACTED] Leader of the Council

"I would like to know more about the new Assistant Executive member positions and the evidence of need leading to their creation. [REDACTED], I understand that you were vociferously opposed to the existence of these positions - and derogatory in your criticism of the previous administration - when they were first introduced. With perhaps a better understanding now of the responsibilities and pressures of leading a Council since becoming Leader, the creation of the new positions suggests you have come to agree with the previous administration. Since the appointments did not need the approval of full Council, could you outline the relevant executive decision making - was this by way of an Executive Members' vote (and were all parties of the Rainbow Coalition in agreement?) or is it solely your decision as Council Leader? If it is the latter, are your Rainbow Coalition Executive colleagues all in accord and were they consulted?"

Response from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], thank you for your questions. For ease of reading for others I have split them down as follows:

I would like to know more about the new Assistant Executive member positions and the evidence of need leading to their creation.

1. Q = [REDACTED], I understand that you were vociferously opposed to the existence of these positions - and derogatory in your criticism of the previous administration - when they were first introduced

A = I was vociferously opposed to most of what the previous administration did, in the partisan way in which they led this council, leaving us as one of the most unequal and poorly funded authorities in England. I shall say that my comments on their effectiveness under the previous administration were all made in public meetings. Given that very sadly one of those who so served is no longer with us, any more detailed specific comment would be disrespectful.

2. Q = With perhaps a better understanding now of the responsibilities and pressures of leading a Council since becoming Leader, the creation of the new positions suggests you have come to agree with the previous administration.

A = No! We are faced with four challenges of a global pandemic, an extant crippling recession, public services stripped of capacity by your party's Austerity policies and, more parochially, having to adapt to working and meeting remotely. Those challenges are not going to go away any time soon and the workloads of the executive for the foreseeable future are only going to increase. In these circumstances I had concerns as leader on the capacity of this administration to deliver for the residents of North Somerset and also for the personal wellbeing of my colleagues with the team we have. It was decided for speed to use the mechanisms available to increase that capacity until we can hold an annual meeting. As you will know there is a constitutional review ongoing.

3. Q = Since the appointments did not need the approval of full Council, could you outline the relevant executive decision making - was this by way of an Executive Members' vote (and were all parties of the Rainbow Coalition in agreement?) or is it solely your decision as Council Leader? If it is the latter, are your Rainbow Coalition Executive colleagues all in accord and were they consulted?

A = as the appointments are outside the constitution (which was one of the criticisms I made when they were first created) then formally they need no approval, yet unlike the previous administration, we have prepared detailed role descriptions for the Assistant Executive Members so that there is transparency about their remit and purpose. However this administration makes all decisions in a collegiate manner, the executive met virtually informally, discussed and agreed. Once that proposal had been agreed then the decision was announced at the next available public meeting. And I should like to record my thanks to all my colleagues in the administration for their work during these times of emergency.

Supplementary Question asked at the meeting

In a supplementary question, [REDACTED] asked the Leader whether the skills and experience of other councillors had been considered in determining which members should be appointed as Assistant Executive Members, whether other options had

been considered and whether there had been consensus on these appointments across the Executive.

In response [REDACTED] drew attention to the written responses he had already provided on these appointments and added that he had held confidential meetings with his colleagues and all were in accord. His rationale for making these appointments now was to safeguard the health and wellbeing of Executive colleagues who were dealing with the challenges of a global pandemic in addition to business as usual. He confirmed other options had been considered and that he would review current arrangements and alternatives as appropriate at the Annual meeting in May.

6. Question from [REDACTED], Leader of the Council

“Can the leader tell me if the appointments of the two assisting executive members are temporary and that he will review the appointments in May with the view of removing them and if that’s not to be the case can I ask why?”

Response from [REDACTED]

As I have said in response to a very similar question, we are faced with four challenges of a global pandemic, an extant crippling recession, public services stripped of capacity by Austerity and having to adapt to working and meeting remotely. Those challenges are not going to go away any time soon and the workloads of the executive for the foreseeable future are only going to increase. In these circumstances I had concerns as leader on the capacity of this administration to deliver for the residents of North Somerset and also for the personal wellbeing of my colleagues with the team we have. It was decided for speed to use the mechanisms available to increase that capacity until we can hold an annual meeting when we shall review all executive appointments.

7. Question from [REDACTED], Leader of the Council

“Following the local government election of May 2019 it fell to the Leader of Council to establish an Executive (Cabinet). In our new multi-party council the appointment to executive office and committee chairs needed to satisfy the aspirations, demands and prejudices of (1) co-operating parties (Independent, Liberal Democrat, Labour, Green and Portishead Independent, Conservatives having chosen not to participate in a NSC coalition) and (2) the constituencies, towns and parishes which make up North Somerset. A balanced approach was sought, though the speed with which offices needed to be filled precluded councillors getting to know one another since everything had to be cut and dry at our first meeting of Council. Many of us met for the first time at that opening gathering eighteen months ago and therefore had little understanding of individual interests or skills.

Hopefully, and despite not meeting in person since the March lock-down, we all now have a much better understanding of one another’s abilities, or lack of them.

The Leader’s recent decision to appoint deputy Executive Members has come without any discussion by councillors.

Would the Leader explain the rational for making these appointments and for filling the posts as he has done? Why were ‘ordinary’ councillors not given an opportunity to debate the matter of deputy Executive Members? If these appointments were made

to relieve existing Executive Members of their workload then either those workloads were excessive or the office holders were not up to task.

Would the Leader state whether the remuneration of these new office holders is being taken from the existing cost of Executive membership or being financed from other sources? The pandemic has caused Chairman of Council's duties to become virtually non-existent; perhaps money is being sequestered from the Chairman's budget to help finance these new appointments?

It is clear that some Executive and Committee office holders' workloads are hefty. It is equally clear that some are light. Will the Leader agree to investigate this disparity along with a consideration of how the Executive works, in order for appropriate discussion to occur and for changes to be in place at the Annual Meeting in May 2021?"

Response from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], thank you for your many questions. For continuity the response is similar to those already given:

1. We are faced with four challenges of a global pandemic, an extant crippling recession, public services stripped of capacity by Austerity and having to adapt to working and meeting remotely, as well as providing 'business as usual'. Those challenges are not going to go away any time soon and the workloads of the executive for the foreseeable future are only going to increase. Additionally we have to produce a new Local Plan and address the very serious implications of the pandemic for our local businesses in key areas of tourism and hospitality.
2. In these circumstances I had concerns as leader on the capacity of this administration to deliver for the residents of North Somerset and also for the personal wellbeing of my colleagues with the team we have. It was decided for speed to use the mechanisms available to increase that capacity until we can hold an annual meeting.
3. As the appointments are outside the constitution then formally they need no approval, yet unlike the previous administration, we have prepared detailed role descriptions for the Assistant Executive Members so that there is transparency about their remit and purpose. And this administration makes all decisions in a collegiate manner.
4. The funding is from underspend on councillors' expense costs.
5. We have already committed to a review of the Executive at the next annual meeting, which will hopefully be in May 2021.
6. It would be impolite of me to comment on the Chairman's business.

Pre-application advice request form



Your details

1

Full name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Agent's details (if applicable)

Please give details of the person dealing with the project

2

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

The address of the site/premises

3

Postcode

Tell us what service you require

Please confirm which service level you require (see advice notes for description of each service)

4

House extensions

[Advice about house extensions](#)

Service level 1

[Advice about level 1](#)

(not available for householder development)

Service level 2

[Advice about level 2](#)

(not available for householder development)

Service level 3

[Advice about level 3](#)

Additional meetings*

[Advice about additional meetings](#)

*For additional meetings tell us the reference number of the existing request for pre-application advice.

Reference number:

(the reference number can be found in correspondence we have sent you)

5 **What you propose to do**
For example, a single storey extension to enlarge the lounge or erection of two dwellings

6 **Tell us about the number of units, bedrooms or floor area.**

Number of dwellings or flats:
Total number of bedrooms:
Non-residential floor area:
Change of use - floor/site area:

7 **The existing use of the building/land**
For example, dwelling, office, shop or agricultural

8 **Additional comments**

9 **Reference numbers**
If this request relates to a previous planning application, pre-application request or appeal please confirm the reference number(s)
Reference number(s)
(reference numbers can be found in correspondence we have sent you)

10 **Essential information**
You must include the following with your request:

Location plan [Advice about location plans](#)
Photograph(s) of the site

Payment

Before sending us this form you must pay the fee by following step one and step two:

11

Step 1 – calculate the fee [List of fees](#)

Step 2 – pay the fee [Payment page](#)

When choosing the service to pay for, select 'pay fee for advice about if you will get permission'

Amount paid: £ **Date paid:**

Submit

After the fee has been paid

Submit this form, together with the information required at section 10 and any other supporting documents, using our online contact form at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/contactplanning

Notes

House extensions

This service provides written advice about alterations proposed to an existing dwelling or the erection or alteration of residential outbuildings. We will not normally carry out any consultation and no meetings are provided. We aim to provide our written advice to you within eight weeks of the request. During periods of high demand this may take longer.

Please carefully read the general notes.

Service level 1

Informal advice will be provided verbally only, during the meeting. The level of advice offered is restricted to scoping the main issues as identified during the meeting. Meetings will normally be held at council offices and the planning officer attending will not normally carry out any preparation by, for example, researching the history of the site. Meetings normally last about 30 minutes and no longer than one hour. We will contact you to arrange a date for the meeting which will normally be within four weeks of the request. During periods of high demand this may take longer. It is recommended that, after the meeting, you seek further pre-application advice at service levels 2 or 3. This service is not available in relation for householder schemes (proposals to extend or alter an existing dwelling).

Please carefully read the general notes below.

Service level 2

This service provides written advice that is more limited than that provided by service level 3. The advice offered is restricted to scoping the main issues and matters of general planning principle, such as the suitability of the site, in planning policy terms, for the type of development. Under this service no detailed elements of the scheme (such as design, ecology, flooding or highways matters) will be considered, no consultation will be carried out and no meetings are offered. This service is not provided for householder

schemes (proposals to extend or alter an existing dwelling. We aim to provide our written advice to you within eight weeks of the request. During periods of high demand this may take longer.

Please carefully read the general notes below.

Service level 3

This service provides a more considered view compared to Levels 1 and 2. It gives more detailed advice in writing about what we consider to be the main issues relating to the development. Internal consultation may undertaken with specialist services but is limited to our consideration of the main issues. Consulted responses from external partners such as Historic England, the Environment Agency or Wessex Water is not included. We aim to provide our written advice to you within eight weeks of the request. During periods of high demand this may take longer.

Please carefully read the general notes below.

Pre-application advice forum (PAF)

Our PAF service forms part of service level 3 for large-scale applications. We will contact you to arrange a meeting with the forum within two weeks of your request. The PAF process typically takes eight weeks but on agreement with the applicant, this can be extended. To discuss how the PAF process can help your project [contact us](#) so that we can arrange an introductory meeting.

Please carefully read the general notes below.

Additional meetings

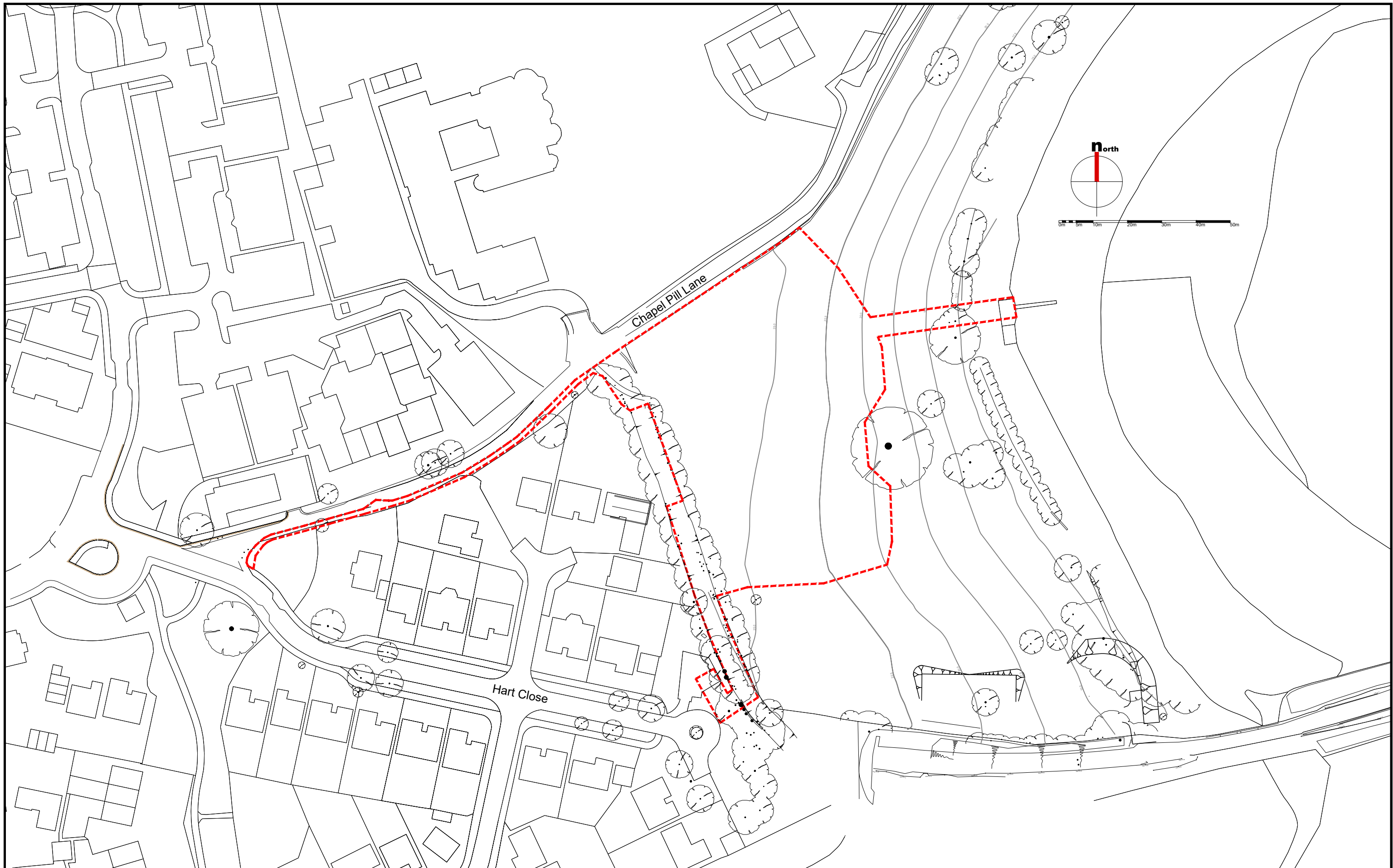
Additional meetings can only be requested in relation to existing and ongoing requests for pre-application advice at service level 3 or within six months of a decision we have issued in relation to a formal planning application. Additional meetings are limited to two additional meetings only.

Please carefully read the general notes below.

General notes

1. We reserve the right to not accept requests for pre-application advice.
2. Requests for advice will not be accepted or considered until the following has been submitted:
 - a. A pre-application request application form completed in full
 - b. A location plan at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500 with the site edged red
 - c. Photographs of the site
 - d. The required fee
3. The advice given, whether in writing or verbally, is based on the information you provide to us.
4. The advice given, whether in writing or verbally, is the informal opinion of the officers of the council only and does not fetter or prejudice our statutory duty, as the local planning authority, to determine formal planning and other applications, pursuant to our statutory powers and duties under the planning acts or otherwise.
5. You need to act upon the advice we give within six months since changes to planning policy, interpretation of policy or any other relevant issues can result in advice becoming out of date.
6. When you are unable to act quickly on the advice given, we recommend that you submit a new request for further advice – standard fees will apply.
7. We may share and discuss your proposal with local councillors, town or parish councils or other statutory consultees.
8. We may share the advice we provide with other developers, separately from the details of your request.
9. We may share your request for advice and the advice we provide following a request made they under the Freedom of Information Act.

10. We do not normally place requests for pre-application advice on our website unless:
 - a. a related formal planning application is received
 - b. we consider it to be in the public interest
11. Before sending us a request for pre-application advice you should read our [privacy statement](#)



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Revision	Description	Rev By	Date
-	First Issue	-	22.07.2019

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Project Title: Chapel Pill Lane

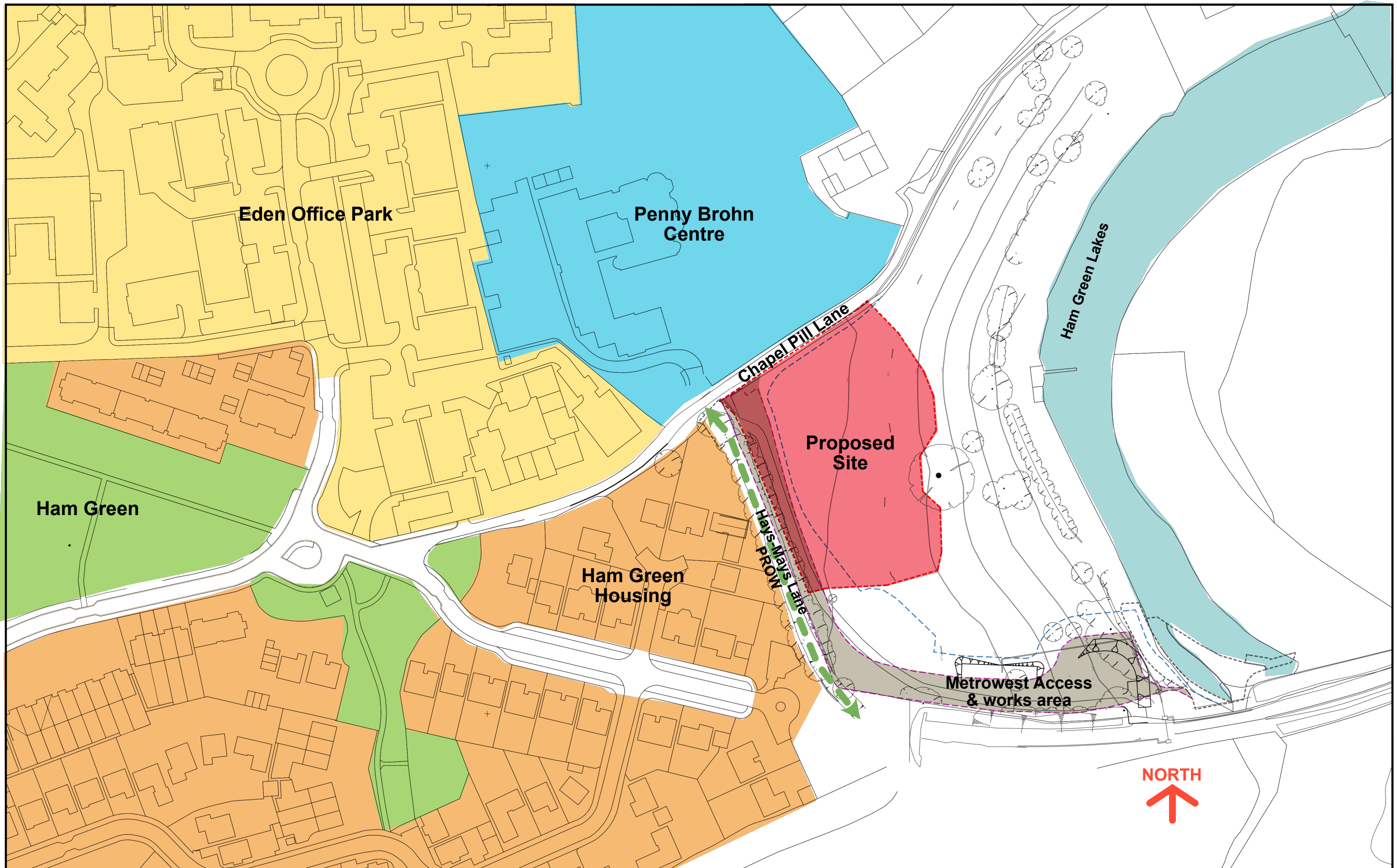
Drawing Title: SITE
 Site Location inc. off-site areas

Drawn By: MB Date: FEB 2020

Checked By: CP Scale: 1:1000 @ A3

Drawing No: 17079 - 100 Rev: Pr2

Status: **PRELIMINARY**



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Revision	Description	Rev By	Date
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Project Title: Chapel Pill Lane

Drawing Title: SITE
 Site Location

Drawn By: MB Date: FEB 2020






Checked By: CP Scale: 1:1250 @ A3

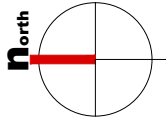
Drawing No: 17079 - 100 Rev: Pr1

Status: PRELIMINARY

Note:
Land retention strategy developed from Craddys drawing no. 11138 SK007. Information shown is indicative and subject to detailed levels and bank design.

Legend:

-  Indicative surface water drainage route (3m easement)
-  Indicative foul drainage route (3m easement)
-  1 in 3 Banked fall
-  1 in 1 Reinforced geogrid bank
-  Reinforced geogrid retaining structure



0m 5m 10m 20m 30m 40m 50m



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Revision	Description	Rev By	Date
Pr2	Existing entrance utilised, footpath shown on Chapel Pill Lane, 2 x 2 bed flats replaced by 3 x 1 bed houses	MB	04.10.2019
Pr1	Red line boundary adjusted to show land retention strategy. Indicative drainage route shown.	MB	02.08.2019
-	First Issue	-	22.07.2019

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Project Title: Chapel Pill Lane

Drawing Title: **SITE**
Site Plan

Drawn By: MB Date: JUL 2019

Checked By: CP Scale: 1:500 @ A3

Drawing No: **17079 - 101** Rev: **Pr2**

Status: **PRELIMINARY**

Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2026



**ABBOTS LEIGH, HAM GREEN,
PILL, EASTON-IN-GORDANO**

The Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan was prepared on behalf of the two Parish Councils of Abbots Leigh and Pill & Easton-in-Gordano by a Steering Group drawn from the parish councils, the local community and Alliance Homes. The Steering Group was representative of all parts of the area and brought a range of knowledge and expertise to the task.

Membership

Sue Adamson

(Easton-in-Gordano), Parish Councillor)

Jill Coleman

(Easton-in-Gordano, Board member Pill and District Community Land Trust)

Don Davies

(Pill, North Somerset Councillor for Pill/Abbots Leigh wards, Pill and District Community Land Trust)

Lucy Byrne

(Ham Green, Climate Change and Environment Group)

Bob Langton

(Pill, Pill and Easton Parish Councillor)

Rob Harvey

(Pill, Environment)

Lin Matthews

(Pill, Chair Pill and Easton Community Forum)

Peter Milner

(Pill, Community)

Alison Needler

(Ham Green, Community)

Stephen Robertson

(Abbots Leigh, Business West)

Simon Talbot-Ponsonby

(Abbots Leigh, Chair Parish Council, Pill and District Community Land Trust)

Jo Tuckwell

(Pill; local employer)

Peter Stanley

(Pill, Parish Councillor)

Murray Stewart

(Abbots Leigh; Parish Councillor, Pill and District Community Land Trust)

Cathryn Vallender

(Alliance Homes)

Martin Walker

(Abbots Leigh: Parish Councillor)

Trevor Wraith

(Easton-in-Gordano, Parish Councillor)

The Steering Group is grateful for the engagement and support of many local individuals and organisations. A full list is included in the Consultation Paper submitted with the Plan.

Special thanks go to Celia Dring our liaison from North Somerset Council who, over three years, has been full of constructive support and advice.

October 2020

The Neighbourhood Plan was available for local consultation from April 6th 2020. As a consequence of COVID-19 the consultation period has been extended to 12th September. Comments should be sent to nhoodplan@btinternet.com

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Volume 2 Background Papers

Housing

Transport and Movement

Environment

Heritage

Economy and Employment

Climate Change

Community

Copies of Volume 2 are to be found on the Neighbourhood Plan page of the Neighbourhood Plan website www.pillanddistrictplan.org

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared in order to guide the long-term development of an area. Set within the broader context of national and local planning policies and housing targets, the Plan reflects the community's wishes about the appropriate location and nature of local development. Underpinning all aspects of the Plan is sustainability, with community engagement also crucial to the preparation of the plan. The Plan is only approved after a local referendum.

The Localism Act 2011 encourages local communities to draw up a Neighbourhood Development Plan. In areas where there is a Parish Council it takes the lead in neighbourhood planning. Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano are all distinct settlements, but have a number of important planning and development issues in common, including:

- A concern about urban sprawl from the edge of Bristol down to the M5 motorway should development be allowed to spread along the A369.
- A related concern over risks to the Green Belt with valuable open space, together with environmental and heritage assets at threat of loss.
- A recognition that the A369 is, and will increasingly be, overloaded with related concerns about speed, safety, noise and pollution.
- Appreciation that the Avon Gorge, the Avon itself and the longshore towards the Severn represented an asset valuable to the whole neighbourhood area.

In July 2016, therefore, the Parish Councils of Abbots Leigh and Pill & Easton-in-Gordano agreed to undertake a joint Neighbourhood Plan, with Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council having formal lead responsibility.

1.2 Preparing the Plan

A request to North Somerset Council in May 2016 for a Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the two parishes was approved in August 2016. Throughout 2017, effort was put into explaining to local communities what the Plan involved, what were the challenges facing the area, and how preparation of the Plan would proceed. Initial consultation revealed the key issues. In 2018 work was moving forward in the collection of data about the main themes of the Plan – housing, transport, environment, heritage, economy, climate change and community. In the autumn of 2018 and again in autumn 2019 grant funding was obtained from Locality, and three consultants were commissioned to provide background analysis on transport, environment and energy.

Through late 2018 and the first half of 2019 Background Papers were finalised and consultation moved ahead with a range of events, meetings, interviews and mini-questionnaires (details in the Consultation Statement). A website was created and a Steering Group established, drawn from the two parish councils together with additional community members with relevant skills and experience.

From spring 2019 the outlines and structure of a plan emerged and in the autumn 2019 exhibitions of findings and proposals to be included in the Plan were presented in three exhibitions across the Neighbourhood Area in Abbots Leigh, Pill, and Easton-in-Gordano. In November the Steering Group brought this material together and a first full draft plan

was finalised and agreed in January 2020. The Plan was submitted to North Somerset Council for HRA/SEA screening in March 2020 and local consultation undertaken in a period extended as a consequence of COVID-19 from mid-April to mid-September.

Background Papers were prepared to assist the community in understanding and responding to the key issues facing the neighbourhood. They provide much of the information and evidence on which the Plan is based but have been overtaken by further local consultation and do not address recommendations for policy. The main Plan text draws on, and summarises, these Background Papers but is a complete and free-standing document.

Policy issues are addressed in the main plan and are divided into two categories:

Planning Policies which have a direct impact on plan-making and planning applications (coloured in red).

Community Action Policies which can be taken forward by the parish councils, community organisations or other agencies but are not explicitly planning focussed (coloured in blue).

In order to assist both the local consultation process and the subsequent North Somerset Consultation (also six weeks), and also to assure local residents that appropriate policies do exist, the policy sections at the end of each chapter include a list of those North Somerset Council Core Strategy Policies and Development Management policies which apply, but are not repeated in this Plan.

2 STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

For much of the time while this Neighbourhood Plan was being assembled, the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) was being prepared, and successive drafts of the JSP provided a policy context for our work. In August 2019, however, the strategic context changed. Public Examination of the JSP and subsequent letters from the Inspectors indicated that they were minded to conclude that the JSP was unsound.

A new Local Plan 2038 is now being developed and our Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by the July Challenges and Choices Consultation to which we made a submission. The two Parish Councils have also responded to the September 2020 Call for Sites by submitting the sites proposed for the two development schemes set out in Section 5.5 below. At the same time there are Government proposals for changes to the planning system, to local housing numbers and to the Green Belt, all of which will have an effect on long-term thinking about our area.

The strategic framework for this Neighbourhood Plan, however, remains North Somerset's current Development Plan which consists of its Core Strategy (January 2017), its Development Management Policies (July 2016) and the Site Allocations Plan (April 2018). The implications of this are that our Plan assumes that, with the exception of two sites in Ham Green, the Green Belt remains as it is at present, the Pill Settlement boundary remains unchanged and Abbots Leigh remains 'rural'. The policies suggested in the Plan relate only to the period up to 2026.

At the same time, however, much of our thinking still relates to the longer term and a number of the issues explored are clearly applicable to the fifteen years 2023-38. We expect that once a strategic framework has been finalised for North Somerset, hopefully in early 2023, our Plan will be updated and/or revised and we are happy to make a commitment that this will be done.

3 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AND ITS HISTORY

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area

In May 2016 a proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) covering the whole of the two parishes, including Royal Portbury Dock, was put to North Somerset Council. Following community consultation and comments from a number of individuals, agencies and organisations the Council accepted the proposal in autumn 2016.

The 16 sq.km. NPA covers the two parishes of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and Abbots Leigh. It stretches from Leigh Woods on the outskirts of Bristol to the River Severn at Royal Portbury Dock. The NPA is bounded on the south-east by the parish of Long Ashton, on the south-west by the parishes of Wraxall and Portbury and on its north-western edge by the River Severn with the River Avon marking the north-eastern boundary.¹ In 2017 the area had a population of 5,698, 80% of whom live within the Pill/Easton/Ham Green settlement boundary.

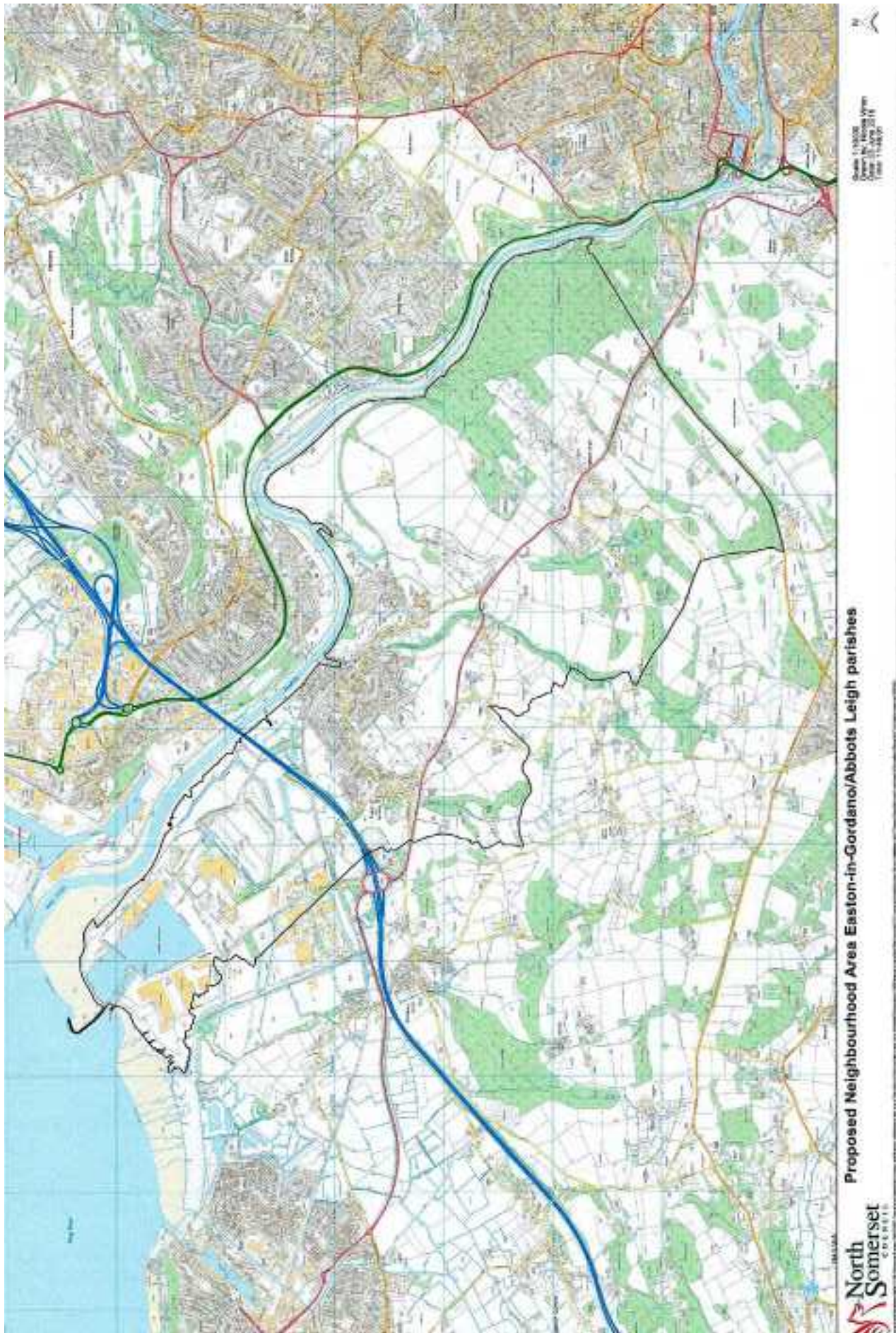
Encompassing most of the Leigh Woods woodland (including some Forestry England and National Trust owned land) down to, but not including, the towpath along the Avon Gorge the NPA includes the village of Abbots Leigh and assorted woodland and farmland past Leigh Court to Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and as far as the M5 excluding the Gordano Motorway Services Area. Beyond the M5, but still within the parish of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano, lies Royal Portbury Dock, owned and operated by the Bristol Port Company. The Dock benefits from specific regulation in terms of development activity.² The Plan, therefore, cannot and does not, address strategic or operational issues relating to the Dock. Nonetheless the dock area makes an important contribution to land-based and marine conservation. In addition, it offers

public access walking and cycling for both leisure and travel to work. The employment opportunities offered by the Dock and the traffic implications of its operations have consequences for the rest of the NPA as does an ongoing review of air quality.

In terms of traffic and movement the NPA is dominated by the busy and often overloaded east/west Bristol to Portishead A369 road. The Ham Green/Pill/Easton settlement is accessed by a separate loop running from the Haberfield junction and re-joining the A369 close to the M5 at St. George's Hill. The north/south M5 itself runs through the NPA with the Junction 19 Service Area immediately adjoining. Along the length of the A369 feeder and connecting roads and lanes link the main road to local residential development. The advent of the Portishead to Bristol passenger rail line will impact Pill in particular. Within the area lie the Avon Trail, the Gordano Round and a network of Public Rights of Way footpaths & bridleways and on and off-road cycle routes criss-crossing the whole of the NPA. The NPA has important heritage assets (a Historic Gardens site at Leigh Court and twenty-seven Historic England listed buildings and monuments) plus a range of protected environmental areas (SSSIs and SNICs, RAMSAR, Protection Areas) as well as flood defences.

1 The River Avon towpath remains owned by Bristol City Council and is thus technically outside the NPA

2 The role of the Bristol Port Company arises from primary legislation to establish the dock project, and exemptions provided via elements of the General Permitted Development Order 1995.



Map 1 Neighbourhood Plan Area

4 VISION, PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

4.1 Organisation of the Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is based on a simple **Vision** behind which lie a set of three **Principles** which acknowledge that the Plan must reflect and respond to the past, the present and the future. Detailed description and analysis of

the issues facing the community are covered in a set of **Background Papers**. These papers inform a set of **Objectives followed by Policies and Development Proposals** which are the key component of the final Plan.

4.2 Primary Objectives

The primary objectives of the Plan are

- Contribute to meeting local housing need through a mix of tenure, size and affordability.
- Minimise the impact of road traffic on congestion, parking, safety, and pollution.
- Encourage walking and cycling and ensure the accessibility, convenience and safety of cycle and walking routes.
- Sustain and enhance the landscape, ecology and biodiversity of the area whilst protecting its environmental assets.
- Respect, preserve and protect the history and the heritage of the built environment.
- Support the generation of local job opportunities for local people.
- Respond to climate change and move towards a carbon neutral neighbourhood.
- Protect, maintain and enhance Open Spaces, Rights of Way and pathways for walking and cycling.
- Celebrate and sustain the strengths, cohesion and inclusion of the diverse communities of the area.

We recognise that these objectives may pull in different directions and may sometimes appear contradictory. Not all the primary objectives can be met across the whole Neighbourhood Area. Meeting housing need may conflict with environmental conservation, new development may

create traffic and fail to encourage walking and cycling. There have therefore been compromises which we hope our local communities will recognise and accept.

5 HOUSING *(See also Background Paper 1)*

Primary Objective

Contribute to meeting local housing need through a mix of tenure, size and affordability.

and similar age distributions. The whole area was predominantly ethnically white with a population largely born in the UK.

In 2011 there were 2,416 **households** in occupied dwellings, occupying 96.8% of the total dwelling stock. 80 dwellings were unoccupied (3.2%). 63 dwellings were over-occupied. In Abbots Leigh 93% of dwellings were in detached or semi-detached houses, by comparison with Pill & Easton-in-Gordano where 67.5% were in houses and 29.6% in flats or terraces. Ownership was the dominant tenure throughout (89% in Abbots Leigh, 76% in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano) with some private rented throughout the area. Social renting was at 7% in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano (and zero in Abbots Leigh).

5.1 Background³

In 2017 the **population** of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) was 5,698 of whom 88% lived in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano parish and 12% in Abbots Leigh parish. The population of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano had grown slightly since 2001 whilst that of Abbots Leigh had declined slightly. Abbots Leigh had a greater proportion of women and older people. There were similar proportions of male and female residents in each parish

5.2 Household Growth

The Neighbourhood Plan Area is dominated by the Green Belt. The whole of the parish of Abbots Leigh and the more recent St. Katherine's Park estate at Ham Green lie within the Green Belt. The built areas of Pill

& Easton-in-Gordano (the Pill Settlement – see Map 2) are surrounded by Green Belt, as is Royal Portbury Dock.



Map 2 Pill Settlement Area

³ This section draws on the National Statistics Office 2011 Census and 2017 population estimates.

Pill & Easton-in-Gordano parish - 9 sq.km including 6 sq km of Royal Portbury - is geographically constrained and concentrated. 96.7% of the parish population (4,478 residents) and 92.4 of the households (1,947 households) lived within the Pill Settlement boundary. (see Map 2).

Within the Green Belt itself growth has been heavily constrained. Abbots Leigh parish (9.13 sq.km) lying entirely within the Green Belt, has no formal settlement boundary and is a much larger, more rural parish than Pill & Easton-in-Gordano with a number of outlying areas beyond the village - Home Farm Road, Ashgrove Avenue, Blackmoor

Road, parts of the Pill Road and a few houses in Ham Green. The proportion of parish population living within the main body of the village is 55% (households 61%).

Between 2007 and 2017 completed development sites within the Settlement Area of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano produced 60 new dwellings.⁴ In Abbots Leigh the figure was 5 new dwellings within the village.⁵ Residential expansion outside, but adjacent to the Pill and Abbots Leigh settlements produced only a further five dwellings across the whole Neighbourhood Area - a reflection of the stringent application of Green Belt policy.

5.3 Housing Demand and Provision

There has been a recent tendency for existing owners to extend rather than sell property and many local planning applications seek improvements and extensions - sideways or upwards. Nevertheless there is strong housing demand throughout the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Developers believe that housing supply in North Somerset is insufficient to meet current housing targets and there have been speculative proposals both for major (1,000 dwellings) development projects at Chapel Pill, Martcombe, and St. George's Hill (now sometimes referred to as Plummer's Hill) and at other smaller sites where landowners/ developers hold land with hope value.

Interviews with Portishead estate agents confirm there is an active housing market

and the attractiveness of Pill, traditionally a less appealing location, has risen sharply in the last couple of years. Pill was described to us as 'on the up'. Abbots Leigh has the strongest links to Bristol, and housing at Ham Green sells quickly. In part this level of housing market buoyancy in the NPA is because there is relatively little movement out - Pill has a strong sense of identity and community with many families keen to remain, even if not in the same property. There is nevertheless movement in from Bristol and Portishead. The proposed Portishead rail line, with a station at Pill, is moving ahead with a planning Development Consent Order submitted to Government in late 2019. Already this is thought to be giving impetus to the housing market.

5.4 Affordability and Housing Need

There have long been concerns about the availability of **affordable housing** for local people in Pill and Easton. There is some over-occupation as measured by

both the number of rooms (63 rooms, amounting to 2.9% of all dwellings) and the number of bedrooms (945 dwellings, amounting to 2.1% of dwellings). There are

4 North Somerset Council: Parish Profiles:2017 Pill and Easton-in-Gordano

5 North Somerset Council: Parish Profiles:2017 Abbots Leigh

significant numbers of households with dependent children and children under 4. Pill West is the 35th most deprived LSOA⁶ in North Somerset, being the only area in North Somerset outside Weston-super-Mare lying within the most deprived 40% in England. On more detailed deprivation indicators – low income, employment, education and skills, health and disability – Pill West scores relatively highly as it does on income deprivation focussing explicitly on children and on older people.

Alliance Homes are the main providers of affordable housing, providing mainly social rented accommodation (former local authority stock). They hold 297 properties, many in the neighbourhood around Victoria Park and the Creek in Pill. Curo, LiveWest (formerly Knightstone Housing) and Sovereign Housing are also registered providers who hold small developments in Pill.

In order to provide more evidence on housing need Pill and District Community Development Trust,⁷ in conjunction with North Somerset Council, conducted a housing survey in autumn 2016. The aims of the survey were to give an indication of the affordable housing need in terms of tenure and house size for people with a local connection in the two parishes, to investigate the housing need and aspirations of older residents in the parishes, and to establish the general level of support for a

small development of affordable housing for local people with housing needs.

2521 questionnaires were distributed to all households in both parishes. 724 were returned (28.4% response rate).

Key findings were:

- 29 respondents were unable to buy or rent in the open market
- 10 additional respondents could not afford to buy a shared ownership property
- 2 respondents over the age of 55 could not afford to buy/rent in the open market
- A further 10 households could afford to meet their need in the open market
- 50 of the above respondents met the local connection criteria
- 71% of all respondents were in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people.

Of the 29 households identified as being in housing need 9 would have a need within twelve months, 12 within 2–3 years and 8 within 3–5 years. 15 homes would be needed for single people or couples. 9 two-bedroom homes were needed for families and 5 three-bedroom homes were needed also for families.

The Survey Report is available in full on the Neighbourhood Plan website at www.pillanddistrictplan.org

5.5 Neighbourhood Area Housing Strategy

The North Somerset Local Plan 2038 will provide a longer-term framework for development covering the years 2023–2038. The Plan may cover issues such as the introduction of a settlement boundary for Abbots Leigh, updating the Pill Settlement boundary to include the housing built on and around the former Ham Green Hospital

site, and reconsideration of the Green Belt and its boundaries. There will certainly be a revision of the housing numbers required of North Somerset, expected to increase to around 1,700 dwellings a year.

In order to underpin their strategic thinking about the possible scale of future growth

6 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are the smallest area for which deprivation information is calculated

7 The Pill and District Community Land Trust (PDCLT) was set up in 2017 under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

and provide a realistic context for their thinking the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group assessed a range of hypothetical longer-term housing scenarios. Three scenarios were tested:

- **Minimal growth** – retaining tight control of new development, maintaining the Green Belt and accepting only infill and/or 'exceptional' new projects.
- **Medium growth** – allowing limited growth in the order of 100-150 new dwellings – mainly in clusters around the edges of Pill and Abbots Leigh with minor adjustments to Green Belt boundaries.
- **Major growth** – development of up to 1000 dwellings making a major contribution to North Somerset housing supply. The proposed development known as 'Pill Green' was used to test this scenario.⁸

An analysis of these scenarios is provided in Background Paper 1. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the two parish councils and the local community, considered that:

Scenario 1 made a minimal contribution to meeting North Somerset housing need and would rely exclusively on infill and/or 'exceptional' sites.

Scenario 2 – the development of 100-150 dwellings in small clusters of housing of around 20-30 dwellings adjacent to existing settlements would retain the bulk of the Green Belt, would offer a modest contribution to the housing needed in service villages and other settlements and would offer close linkage with existing local services in Pill.

Scenario 3 not only runs counter to Green Belt and Landscape Quality policies,⁹

but would threaten biodiversity and the ecological framework of the Area, would exacerbate peak hour traffic congestion and overload on both the A369 and the Pill Loop, would threaten environment and biodiversity, would create further pollution and would hinder attempts to address climate change. In short this scenario is both damaging and unsustainable. Whilst the Joint Spatial Plan is now redundant it concluded that the Easton in Gordano/Pill corridor was '*a very constrained location in terms of transport, Green Belt, heritage, landscape and ecology*'.¹⁰ Expansion of this scale would increase the number of households in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano by 50% and would radically damage the social patterns of community life.

Community opinion on the three scenarios was tested both at public exhibitions in autumn 2019¹¹ and in Regulation 14 local consultation in April-September 2020.

At the Exhibitions 35% of the 210 local residents attending favoured Scenario 1 – minimal new development. 61% favoured Scenario 2 – medium growth. Only 4% welcomed Scenario 3 – major growth of 1000 dwellings.

Local Consultation confirmed these preferences – retention of the bulk of the Green Belt, provision of affordable housing and small-scale local development. The possibilities of major development schemes of up to 1000 dwellings put forward by developers were universally unwelcome to residents.

Results from the 2016 Housing Survey provided both evidence of housing need and (71%) a preference for a small development of affordable housing. Whether the survey remains up to date was checked with North

8 Consultation Comment 15796321/2 submitted to the West of England Joint Spatial Plan Examination by Barton Willmore on behalf of Gallagher Estates

9 North Somerset Council. Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, 2018 pp 45-47

10 Joint Spatial Plan: Towards an Emerging Spatial Strategy, October 2016, Table 2

11 The Exhibitions are described in the separate Consultation Statement

Somerset Council and the survey results were found to be still valid.

This evidence led the Steering Group to confirm that Scenario 2 was the best option because, in the light of the most recent estimates of the levels of dwellings likely to be required in North

Somerset, the Steering Group considered that a slightly larger dwellings target was more realistic. Scenario 2 was adjusted, therefore, to suggest 150–200 dwellings by 2038 provided in clusters of up to 20–30 dwellings. The evidence also led the Steering Group to confirm that Scenarios 1 and 3 were unacceptable.

5.6 Proposals 2020–2026

Whilst the three scenarios were developed to assist strategic thinking and provide a long-term context, particularly relevant given that the North Somerset Local Plan 2038 is under way, the Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan covers only the years up to 2026. The housing targets established for this period in the Core Strategy 2017 required 2,100 dwellings for service villages (including Easton-in-Gordano/Pill) and 985 for other settlements and countryside (including Abbots Leigh). Specific targets for individual parishes were not specified but with the Neighbourhood Area being largely Green Belt little, if any, growth was built into the 2017 Strategy.

In the period to 2026 housing possibilities in the Neighbourhood Area are limited by the Green Belt (CS 6), and the status of Abbots Leigh as a 'rural' parish (CS,16, 32). Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan offers a planned increase in the supply of housing units of fifty-five (55) by 2026 together with re-use of a largely derelict brownfield site.

Infill There is scope for some limited residential infill within the Pill Settlement boundary together with the possibility of residential gain in Abbots Leigh through the adaptation or conversion of agricultural buildings.¹² Together with windfall sites across the Neighbourhood Area this might produce in the order of fifteen (15) new dwellings by 2026.

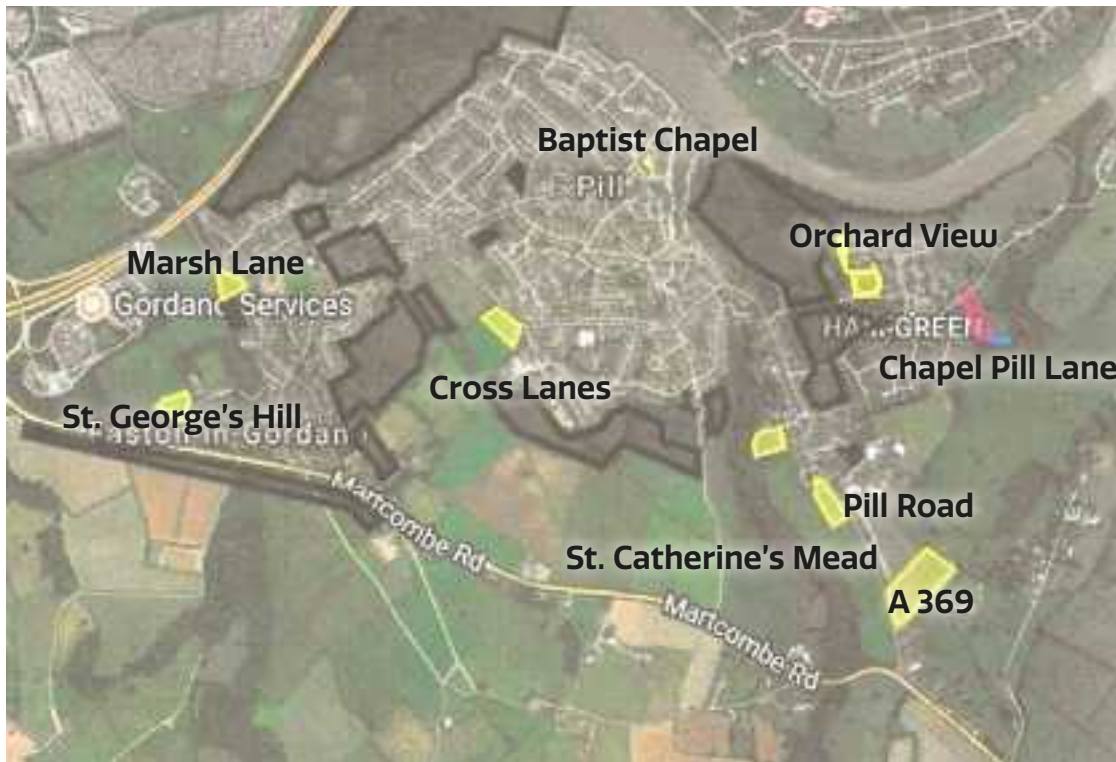
New Development The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in collaboration with the Pill and District Community Land Trust, identified a number of potential sites that could meet the need for a cluster of affordable housing. Nine sites were considered (see Map 3 on page 14).

- The former Pill Baptist Church
- Land off the main road at Ham Green

These two sites lay within the Pill Settlement boundary but were severely constrained in terms of access, size, legal and construction obstacles, and feasible housing type. The remaining six sites lie in the Green Belt, just outside the Pill Settlement boundary.

- Land at the top of St. George's Hill (sometimes referred to as Plummer's Hill)
- Land off Marsh Lane (lower Plummer's Hill)
- Land off Cross Lanes (beside the allotments)
- Land adjacent to St. Catherine's Mead
- Land off the A369 beyond St Katherine's School
- Land at Orchard View/Somerset Lodge
- Land off Chapel Pill Lane/Hayes Mays Lane

On the first four of these latter sites, all the landowners held strong 'hope value' views and were unwilling to consider a sale to the Land Trust. Land beyond St. Katherine's School was thought to be both Green Belt and too far from existing services. The land at Orchard View, not in single ownership



Map 3 Community Land Trust Search for sites

at the time, was too constricted to allow a viable development. A further site – Brookside – was also considered but, lying in the Green Belt and important for play and recreation (see Chapter 11), was rejected by the Steering Group. Two potential sites were identified in Abbots Leigh but the primary need for affordable housing is in Pill and the Land Trust recommended that Abbots Leigh was not a priority for its first development.

Chapel Pill Lane was well located and the only site where the landowner was willing to engage and sign terms of agreement. The whole of the brown field site at Orchard View/Somerset Lodge has since come into single ownership and offers the potential for mixed-use redevelopment within the plan period.

For the period to 2026, therefore, the Plan allocates two new development sites in Ham Green which would offering a further forty (40) new dwellings in the Plan Area by 2026 (see map 4):

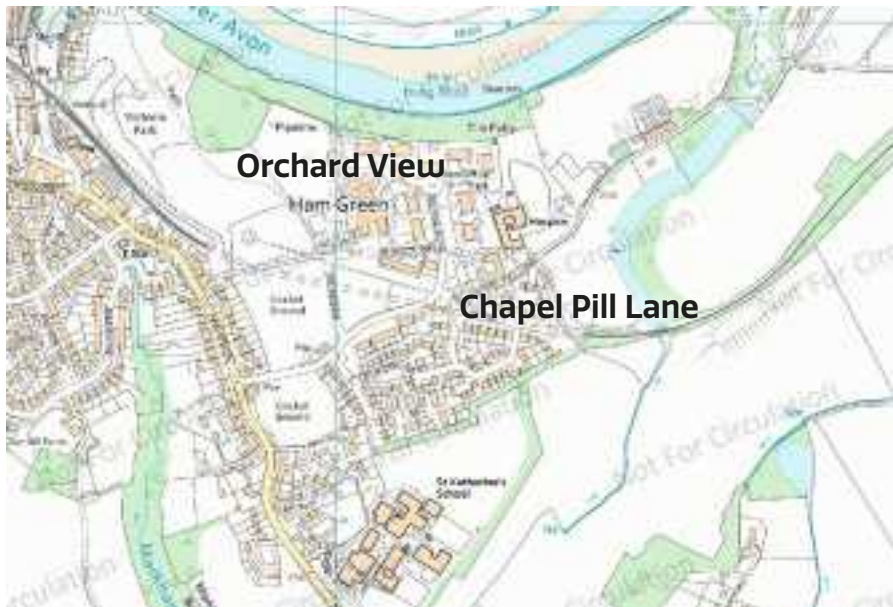
- **ORCHARD VIEW:** a 3-acre brownfield site at Perrett Way in Ham Green for a mixed

development of around thirty (30) mixed tenure housing comprising both market and affordable housing, together with a sixty-bed care home.

- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** A one-and-a-half-acre exception scheme of up to sixteen (16) affordable housing units to rent on Chapel Pill Lane in the Green Belt (proposed by the Pill and District Community Land Trust).

It should be noted that the provision of a 60 bed care home would release accommodation elsewhere in North Somerset and beyond and hence making a further contribution to meeting housing need.

Both these sites lie within Ham Green (see Map 4). The former Ham Green Hospital site has been redeveloped to become the Eden Business Park, the St Katherine's Housing Estate and the Penny Brohn Centre. The majority of Ham Green remains outside the Pill Settlement boundary and within the Green Belt.



Map 4 Ham Green

5.7 Improvement Area 1

Improvement Area 1 Orchard View

This proposal brings together what were formerly two separate care units owned by the North Bristol NHS Trust until Ham Green Hospital was closed in the 1950s. Sold to the Milestones Trust, Somerset Lodge became a 35-bed dementia and mental health care home, whilst Orchard View was until, 2010, an Intermediate respite care unit.

Located on Perrett Way, the site is bounded by Eden Business Park and the

Pill Community Orchard and is the final undeveloped part of the former Ham Green Hospital complex (see Map 5). In addition to the two main buildings there are some outbuildings. The whole site is now in single ownership and the owner is keen to redevelop it into mixed-use – twenty-four market and rental housing dwellings (including an affordable housing element) plus a new and up to date care home with sixty beds and a staff of sixty. Up to sixty jobs would be created, many for local people. The intention would be to build smaller units,



Map 5 Orchard View





including some apartments, at a range of size and cost. New housing provision might be up to thirty (30) dwellings incorporating some affordable housing.

The site is in the Green Belt and outside the (now outdated) Pill Settlement boundary. It is within walking distance of Pill Precinct and there is a bus stop and pub at the end of Macrae Road. It has easy access to St. Katherine's School. The site is unoccupied (other than as a temporary rental at Somerset Lodge) and the buildings are run-down and dilapidated (see below).

There could be a small café/shop for residents, visitors to the home, local residents and employees on Eden Business Park for



whom there are no local facilities. There is a walk past the community orchard on Watchhouse Hill down to Pill centre (a section of the River Avon Walkway). The hill is a hugely popular leisure/recreation site and a small café would attract a number of walkers.

As yet there are no design plans, and only informal discussions have been held with the planning authority. This is an already developed, brown field site and the proposal is for a continued health and social care use. The proposal addresses housing need and demand, and might have additional value in so far as long-term care home residents moving to the care home might release other local dwellings into the housing market. The scheme would also offer significant local job opportunities.

5.8 Improvement Area 2

Improvement Area 2 Affordable Housing

Recognising the need for affordable housing, the PDCLT Board has, between 2017-2019, been seeking sites for affordable housing and engaging in discussion with landowners about their willingness to collaborate with a PDCLT project. Subject to final agreement with the owner and planning approval, a site of one and a half acres has been identified lying between Chapel Pill Lane and Hayes Mays Lane. (see Map 6 on p17).

The site is on sloping ground falling down towards Ham Green Lake (a Wildlife Site and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest)

and offers an outlook over open ground and across to the Leigh Court Estate. The development would make joint use of a new MetroWest entrance adjacent to Hayes Mays Lane to be constructed to give access to the Portishead rail tunnel which runs beneath St. Katherine's estate.

Although there is some existing housing on Chapel Pill Lane and Hart Close, the proposed development would be well screened by trees and could not be seen from nearby housing. Penny Bohn UK, a national cancer care centre, lies on the opposite side of Chapel Pill Lane and again would be screened by trees on both sides of the lane.



Map 6 Chapel Pill Lane (Site plan and aerial view)

The one and half acre development would consist of up to 16 dwellings offering a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units. The precise number would depend on final negotiations on land purchase, timing of the MetroWest access road, and available grant for housing and consequent affordable rents. The housing would be provided (built and managed) through a partnership of PDCLT and Alliance Homes and would offer affordable housing to households with a local connection. A local allocation process has been developed to ensure that the new development would meet these requirements.

There is a path past the community orchard on Watchhouse Hill down to Pill centre and there is a bus stop at the end of Macrae Road. Although formally not open to motor vehicles other than residents, traffic on Chapel Pill Lane below the proposed development

site amounts to around 450 motor vehicles on a weekday (200 on weekend days) with the heaviest traffic at morning and evening peaks. Traffic serves Chapel Pill Farm and Rock Cottages on the lane as well as Penny Brohn where car parking for 80 cars is full throughout the day. The lane is also well used by cyclists and walkers but the proposed development site is privately owned with no public access. Ham Green Lake is a private fishing lake to which local walkers have access with the permission of the owner. Hayes Mays Lane is an old track which comes to a dead-end above the entrance to the rail tunnel which runs through to Pill. The proposed development site is within reach of local services at Pill Precinct and is close to St. Katherine's School. Pedestrians would access services either through Chapel Pill Lane or a dedicated pathway from the bottom of the site and up Hart Close and thence via Watchhouse Hill to the Precinct.



The proposed Chapel Pill Lane development site

Both development proposals (Section 5.5 above) are close to important heritage and environmentally important sites at Pill Community Orchard and Ham Green Lake. Any threat to landscape can be addressed sensitively to preserve heritage vistas through appropriate screening and tree-planting. Local

consultation, reported in the Consultation Statement, demonstrated considerable local opposition to the Chapel Pill Lane development, but on balance two thirds (65%) of the 130 respondents expressing a view were in favour of the scheme.

5.9 Housing Design

Whilst the volume and location of new development is important, so also is the quality of new housing in terms of energy efficiency, building design, safety and local environment. The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the importance of well-designed places and we endorse its recommendations.¹³ North Somerset Council Core Strategy also emphasises both that 'quality design should be accorded priority if places are to be shaped as sustainable, and socially, economically and environmentally responsive'.¹⁴ 'New development, both residential (including conversions) and non-residential, should demonstrate a commitment to sustainable design and construction. In relation to climate change, increasing energy efficiency through design, and prioritising the use of sustainable low or zero-carbon forms of renewable energy generation are all important objectives.'¹⁵

The Core Strategy is reinforced in NSC Development Management Policies which highlight the importance of place making, accessibility, housing mix and density.¹⁶ Design of the built environment should be sympathetic to local settings and landscapes. Where there is historic or heritage value in, for example, traditional buildings, conversion may be inappropriate. In the two proposals for development in this Plan emphasis should be given to environmental amenity – tree planting, water run-off, wildlife habitats. Planning applications for new development should be required to include proposals for management and maintenance of the immediate and surrounding environments.

There is a growing incidence both in the more rural parts of the area but also within Pill of the conversion to residential use, often without recourse to planning permission and often of poor design

¹³ National Planning Policy Framework. Section 12, paras 124-127

¹⁴ North Somerset Council, Core Strategy CS 32

¹⁵ North Somerset Council, Core Strategy CS 2

¹⁶ North Somerset Council, Development Management Policies DM 32, 33,34, and 36

quality, of stables, outbuildings etc. Where this is 'infill' it may damage the character and appearance of neighbouring buildings. Where it takes the form of the conversion of an existing barn or other outbuilding it needs to be done in a manner that respects

local character and avoids inappropriate design. Conversion of non traditional barns and utilitarian shelter structures to residential uses should be exempted from a Permitted Development status that currently exists in North Somerset.

5.10 Policies

Existing North Somerset Core Strategy and Development Management Policies already in place address the Green Belt (CS 60), High Quality Design and Place making (CS12), Affordable Housing (CS16), Rural Exception Schemes CS 17), Healthy Living (CS 26), Quality Design (DM 32) and Care homes (DM 41), Conversion of rural buildings to residential use (DM 45).

Policies

HO 1 Site A (Orchard View as shown on Map 5) is allocated for a Care Home and thirty (30) houses.

HO 2 Site B (Chapel Pill Lane as shown on Map 6) is allocated as an exception site of up to sixteen (16) affordable housing units.

HO 3 (also CC 03) New development should be conditional on an energy assessment which minimises carbon footprint and energy requirements.

HO 4 Infill development in keeping with local scale and character will be acceptable within the Pill Settlement boundary.

HO 5 Planning applications for new development should be required to include proposals for the sustainable management and maintenance of the immediate and surrounding environment.

HO 6 Restrictions should be placed on the conversion for residential use without planning permission of outbuildings within the curtilage of a main dwelling.

Community Action

CA/HO 1 The Parish Councils should encourage and stimulate improvement of the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock.

6 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT *(See also Background Paper 2 Transport and Movement)*

Primary Objective

Minimise the impact of road traffic on congestion, parking, safety, and pollution.

Encourage walking and cycling and ensure the accessibility, convenience and safety of cycle and walking routes.

This Chapter was informed by a consultancy study commissioned from the Peter Evans Partnership, Bristol, whose full report is included as an appendix to Background Paper 2.

6.1 Background

Movement within the Neighbourhood Plan Area is dominated by the A369 bisecting the area from the edge of Bristol to the M5. There are major community concerns about the traffic associated with this busy trunk road – volume, speed, pollution and safety. Also important is the Pill Loop, running from the Haberfield junction on the A369 and rejoining at St. George's Hill close to the M5. Within Pill

itself there are concerns about the volume of traffic through the village, as well as anxieties about parking and safety. Feeding into both the A369 and the Pill Loop run a number of side roads and lanes, many narrow and twisting. Motorised traffic is the largest worry for residents, but there is growing commitment to walking and cycling and there are high hopes for the re-opening of the Portishead rail link.

6.2 Traffic Volumes

The A369 is heavily loaded and congestion occurs at peak times. A local resident-led survey in October 2018 showed total daytime traffic flow into and out of Bristol amounting to around 17,000 motorised vehicles (excluding bicycles). Flow in off-peak day-time hours varied, but on average amounted to 71% of peak hour flow. Both the daily flow and the peak and off-peak split figures are broadly consistent with North Somerset Council figures which suggest a typical split of 60% off-peak. Peak-hour traffic into Bristol accounted for 22% of all daytime traffic. 12-hour daytime traffic is estimated to have made up 81% of all 24-hour traffic.

Cars dominated traffic volumes, amounting to over 80% both through the day and at peak hours. Heavy Goods vehicles flowed throughout the day – around 220 in each direction but making up only 2.5% of all traffic. By contrast vans – 1440 a day towards Bristol and 1210 outwards – comprised 15.5% of all traffic.

On the Pill Loop over two thousand (2,105) vehicles per day passed St. Katherine's

School towards Bristol with around 30% then taking a right turn to Martcombe and the remainder joining the A369 traffic towards Bristol. Roughly the same number (2,190) leave the A369 to go into Pill past St. Katherine's School. Cars are dominant throughout the day (84%) and even more so at peak hours – 77% towards Bristol, 88% towards Pill, a balance in part explained by the school run in the morning to St Katherine's School.

At St George's Hill 2,356 vehicles a day leave Easton-in-Gordano to join the M5 whereas a slightly larger number (2,539) leave the A369 to enter Easton-in-Gordano. (the disparity is probably as a result of the one way exit from Easton onto the A 369 via Rectory Road). By contrast with the main A369, the volume of traffic is spread more evenly throughout the day. The volume and speed of traffic – especially heavy lorries – creates major anxieties at a number of points, with the Sandy Lane/Leigh Court junction on the A369 identified in local consultation as a major danger point.

6.3 Traffic Growth

Not only are the current levels of traffic causing some congestion at peak hours,

but further growth seems likely. The latest draft Joint Transport Plan¹⁷ suggests that

17 West of England Combined Authority. Joint Transport Plan. January 2020

without major change the most likely local outcomes by 2036 are vehicle trips up by 26%, CO2 emissions up by 22%, and congestion costs running at £800m a year. The removal of tolls on the Severn Bridges and/or the opening of the South Bristol Link together with growth at Royal Portbury Dock may influence traffic levels

in and around the Neighbourhood Plan Area over the next seven years¹⁸ although due to COVID-19 and lockdown the level of homeworking has increased and traffic levels have dropped. Nevertheless further increases in peak-hour congestion should be avoided.

6.4 Method of Travel

Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan Area over seventy per cent of journeys to work are by car or van either as driver or passenger, 7% by foot or bicycle, 3% by bus with 10% working at or from home. Travel to work is dominated by use of car or van. Around a fifth of residents work within the

Neighbourhood Area and probably have work journeys of less than 2 kilometres.¹⁹ Some Pill residents also make long journeys, although half of the journeys to work from Pill/Easton residents in employment are to Portishead, nearby villages and Avonmouth.

6.5 Safety

The Neighbourhood Plan Area is not a high accident area,²⁰ but despite the relatively small numbers of accidents reported there are fears in the community about speeds on the A369 and the risk of accidents. These are most severe at junctions, where the majority of accidents occur, notably junctions on the A369 and the several side roads joining between the Beggar Bush Lane and the M5 motorway.²¹ In particular there are major concerns about the risk to cyclists as they cross side-roads and private entrances when on the cycle path (for example, the exit to the Clifton College sports ground) and when they join and

cross the main road from side roads and/or cycle paths.

In Pill there have been concerns about a number of danger points on narrow streets/lanes and/or where visibility is poor. In the 2006-16 Parish Plan for Easton-in-Gordano, Pill and Ham Green there was support for a one-way priority system and for a safety rail on the raised footpath at Lodway. A more recent local transport survey (late 2019) demonstrated that there was continuing support for a 20 mph. speed limit within the Pill & Easton-in-Gordano parish (a wish that has recently been agreed).

6.6 Parking

Parking is also one of the issues which has emerged in discussions about the Pill Precinct and potential improvements to parking arrangements e.g. on Pill Street and

around Victoria Park. These would be an important element in planning the future of the Precinct. The local transport survey endorsed tighter parking policies in Pill –

18 See Chapter 9 below

19 Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 2, Para 2.6-2.7

20 Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 2, Para 2.8

21 Police accident data provided by North Somerset Council

double yellow lines (64% in favour), time limited parking (56%), more enforcement (69%). There was mixed support for a residents parking scheme in some areas (40% for, 33% against). Elsewhere there is likely to be a spillover demand for parking space as a consequence of the opening of the rail station.

In Abbots Leigh current parking difficulties have arisen in Church Road and Manor Road as a consequence of the combination of the re-opening of the George Inn, the opening of a Fitness Gym behind the Village Hall, and the more frequent presence of delivery vans. Improvements to traffic management and parking arrangements in the village need to be considered as a distinct issue – closely related to, but distinct from, the possibilities of a Conservation Area (see Chapter 8 Heritage).

Clear verges help to provide safe walking routes. Throughout the Neighbourhood Area there is a growing incidence of parking

on pavements and verges. Parking on pavements obstructs pedestrians especially those with prams or pushchairs. Verges are often a protection for pedestrians but also offer important habitats for insects or small mammals. They can also be useful play spaces for young children.

Generally there is a tension between those who want access to parking to be limited and others wanting it to be made easier, a tension evident from local consultation responses to the Plan in relation to Pill on Macrae Road and to Abbots Leigh on Church Road. Throughout the area there is also tension between motorists – parking on pavements – and pedestrians obstructed by parked cars. It is particularly in the interests of those walking with pushchairs or buggies that pavements should be kept clear. Finally there is tension between those who concrete over gardens to provide parking space and those who wish to see all green space around dwellings protected.

6.7 Capacity, Overload and Congestion

Through Abbots Leigh at the George Inn, the A369 is congested and traffic flow constrained at peak hours and to a lesser extent through the day. The road has frontage access, side roads, bus stops, and an at-grade pedestrian crossing. The speed limit is now 30 mph. Heavy vehicles/buses are often unable to pass each other. Up the Pill Road and towards Martcombe the road is heavily used and at St. George's Hill traffic flow is limited by the provision of a T-junction traffic light control.

The Pill Loop creates resident concern at the Precinct and the narrow part of the Loop at Lodway has been a concern for years.²² Technically the road width allows a car and lorry to pass, but with walls on one

side and a pedestrian walkway (without railings) on the other only two cars can pass and on-site observation provides evidence that the road is on occasions in practice one way.²³ The frequent misdirection of heavy vehicle bound for Royal Portbury Dock creates unwelcome traffic through Easton-in-Gordano.

There is much cycle movement on the A369 and cycle and pedestrian movement within Pill on the Pill Loop. Residents are hindered by the frequency of the traffic both within Pill, and especially at the Precinct and in Abbots Leigh where crossing from Manor Road to Church Road and vice versa is hazardous.

22 The 2006–26 Parish Plan for Easton-in-Gordano, Pill and Ham Green highlighted major traffic concerns, and a recent 2019 local survey called for a 20mph speed limit in the parish

23 PEP consultants observed traffic flows as part of their work for us

6.8 Pollution

The main pollutant measured by NSC locally is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) originating primarily from road traffic emissions. There are two monitoring sites in the Neighbourhood Area – in Pill at the end of Avon Road (the Railway Line) and at the junction of the A369 and the Pill Road (the A369). At the A369 site the mean annual level was 28.0 – the third highest annual level in North Somerset. From November

to April inclusive, however, the level of air quality was above 30.0 and reached 45.1, again the third highest level for any month across the whole district.²⁴ Increases in road traffic emissions should be avoided.²⁵ Concerns were expressed in consultation that air pollution levels around the M5 and Junction 19 were severe and that monitoring should be extended to give better coverage.

Cycling and Walking

6.9 Cycle Networks

A shared-use traffic free path runs alongside the A369 from Bridge Road in Leigh Woods all the way to the road into Pill at Ham Green. The section to the George in Abbots Leigh has been designated as **National Cycle Route 334** and following Manor Road, past Abbots Pool and then Sandy Lane this continues to Lower Failand and Portbury. This cycle path attracts both commuter riders to Bristol but also recreational cycling, accessing, for example, Leigh Woods, Abbots Pool and Snake's Well. There are several side entrances and 'give way' markings which slow down and deter hardened cyclists. As a result and despite the poor quality of the road surfaces in some places, some cyclists choose to cycle on the main road because it is quicker even if it slows down traffic flow.

The cycling and walking **National Cycle Route 41** (using part of the Avon Trail) runs along the towpath beside the River Avon through the Avon Gorge to Chapel Pill, through Watchhouse Hill and Pill and then connects to the cycle route on the Avonmouth Bridge across the river. One section of this route lies within the boundary of Bristol City Council, having been historically the towpath up the river through the Avon Gorge leading to the

Port of Bristol. The route is unsurfaced and unlit and is very poorly maintained so that in wet conditions it has become almost impassable in places. Nevertheless this offers a level access into Bristol and is popular as both a commuting and recreational route. Due to lack of maintenance, however, its condition has deteriorated so much that it is now almost impassable in places and needs significant repair works. **National Cycle Route 26** branches off Route 41 before the Avonmouth Bridge and goes through Royal Portbury Dock to Sheepway and Portishead.

The 2011 Census shows that only 7.4% of Neighbourhood Area residents in employment travelled to work by bicycle (199 cyclists). Since then the numbers choosing the bicycle as a means of travel – to work and elsewhere – has risen significantly. Cycling has become more popular, cycling has become safer, the cycle path beside the A369 has made travel to and from Bristol more acceptable.

Cycling numbers measured at the four cycling census points within the Neighbourhood Area suggest that some cyclists use the path from Pill to Sheepway

24 North Somerset Council, 2018 Air Quality Annual Status Report, June 2018

25 A reduction in emissions is one of several possible actions being considered in the current Bristol Port Company Air Quality Strategy consultation, February 2020. See also para 10.6 following

– possibly making travel to work journeys to Royal Portbury Dock. Secondly up to half of the cyclists on the A369 use the carriageway rather than the cycle path, reinforcing the point made earlier that many cyclists avoid the cycle path.²⁶ Finally travel by bicycle

to school runs at only 4% of pupils at St. Katherine's School. The proposed reduction in speed limits in Pill to 20mph will have a positive effect both on safety and in encouraging more cycling both to school and elsewhere within the neighbourhood.

6.10 Walking: Rights of Way and Footpaths

There is an extensive network of walking routes (some shared with cyclists) into, out of and across the Neighbourhood Area. 61% of respondents to a local 2019 survey used local footpaths on a daily basis with 62% walking between one and five miles. 22% feel unsafe.

Walking to Work and School. Travel to work on foot (and doing so over a distance of less than 2 kilometres) accounts for around fifteen per cent of work journeys.²⁷ Walking to work is most likely for those employed locally – to shops in the Precinct or elsewhere, to the Health Centre, to pubs. A few will also walk to work at the two business parks at Eden Park and the Old Brewery or at Penny Brohn, but information collected from such organisations suggests the numbers are low – Eden Park has over 320 parking places, Penny Brohn 80 and both are regularly full. Walking to school is encouraged at Crockerne Primary making a contribution to relieving congestion in the immediate vicinity.

Walking to Access Services Within Pill there are several walks and lanes which cut down from Westward Drive, Cross Lanes and Crockerne Drive to give access to the retail outlets of the Precinct as well as to the Post Office, the Resource Centre and Victoria Park whilst other lanes provide access upwards to what will be the new rail station. The busy main road through Pill is a difficult crossing

for pedestrians to and from the precinct. An additional zebra crossing would be welcome.

Recreational Walking

There are two major trails relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan Area – the River Avon Trail and the Gordano Round. The River Avon Trail (see also Cycling para 6.9 above) runs alongside the river from below the Clifton Suspension Bridge to Pill. The Gordano Round is a circular walk much of it within the Neighbourhood Plan Area whilst the long-distance Monarch's Way passes through Abbots Leigh.

There are numerous rights of way and footpaths on the Leigh Court Estate as well as some footpaths which lead down through the Bottoms across Priors Fields towards Pill (see map 7). Elsewhere within the Neighbourhood Area there are several shorter footpaths/bridle paths running both through and across the two parishes, as well as a number of lanes and passages within the Pill Settlement boundary which serve to link streets together and/or provide shortcuts to the Pill Precinct.²⁸ Such routes are important for walkers in general but are crucial in providing safe access for older people, young children and people with disabilities. Some routes would benefit from improvement either as public footpaths or permissive paths and all would benefit from regular maintenance.²⁹

26 Details of cycling numbers are given in Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 2, Para 3.2

27 See Section 2.8 above

28 Policies towards the protection, maintenance and enhancement of Rights of Way are set out in NSC Development Management Policy DM 25

29 The cover of this Plan shows a number of 'Views from the Footpaths' a 2019 community project



Map 7 Rights of Way in the Neighbourhood Area

6.11 Active Travel

The availability of Rights of Way and footpaths can encourage active travel. There are a range of initiatives initiated by Travel West and the NSC Cycling Forum which discourage the use of cars and encourage cycling – the loan scheme to try out cycling, for example and efforts to encourage electric bikes (and in the future scooters). Car sharing is one obvious measure especially appropriate for the many commuters into and out of the Neighbourhood Area.

There are also initiatives targeted on children – the National School Training Awards (STARS) which has been adopted by Crockerne Primary School. Elsewhere businesses encourage travel to work by bicycle with Travel Champions as well as car sharing. There is already some car-sharing and cycling to Royal Portbury Dock which the Port Company is working to promote further. Other businesses at Eden Park and the Old Brewery will be encouraged to give greater visibility to Active Travel.

6.12 Public Transport

Buses The Neighbourhood Area is currently served by two bus services. The X4 serves Abbots Leigh, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano whilst the X3 keeps to the A369 bypassing Pill and Easton-in-Gordano. The services have been regarded by the community as being acceptable (subject to occasional irregularity and unreliability) and the recent change to a double decker service was evidence of the commitment of the bus company to a good service. A new Express service to Bristol from Portishead via the

Portway will add to available services and may divert some of the load from services using the A369. Nevertheless, the reductions announced (April 2020) are a severe discouragement to the use of the bus from Easton, Pill and Abbots Leigh and may well bring some transfer of traffic from public transport to private vehicle use. This adds to the concerns, set out in Chapter 5, of the impact of any major development likely to affect traffic load on the A369. New

development which adds to congestion should be avoided.

Rail A Bristol Temple Meads to Portishead rail service is scheduled to open in 2023. Services will call at Pill, where a restored station will be created (see Map 8). The new service is welcome, will attract some traffic off the roads and will provide faster journeys to Bristol and to Portishead. At the same time the infrastructure required to install and manage the service will create some inconvenience and care needs to be taken in relation to sensitive points. Firstly there is a threat to the environment along the line both at Chapel Pill and particularly at Lodway where the ponds, wetland and woodland provides an important corridor habitat. Wherever possible there should be avoidance of threat

to wildlife and restitution of any damage to the ecology of the area.

Secondly there may also be impacts within Pill itself. In particular with the establishment of the Pill rail station and the growth of travel by rail, the area around the station (see Map 8 below) will experience change – potentially more drop off and pick up traffic, parking congestion, more business for local shops, possible residential development proposals. It will be important over the coming years for planning decisions in the immediate area to recognise and take account of such changes.



Map 8 Pill Railway Station

6.13 Policies

Existing North Somerset Core Strategy and Development Management Policies already in place address Transportation and Movement (CS10), Parking (CS11), Safety, Traffic and Infrastructure (DM 24), Public Rights of Way, pedestrian and cycle access (DM 25), Parking Standards Car Parks (DM 29).

Planning Policies

T 1 New development should be located so as to integrate with well-provided and regular public bus or rail infrastructure and service provision and to minimise traffic congestion and air pollution.

T 2 Rights of Way and pathways within the Neighbourhood Area (and around The Bottoms, Martcombe, Chapel Pill and Ham Green in particular) should be protected, maintained, enhanced and extended.

T 3 The impact of the growth of electric vehicle use (e.g. the need for charging points) should be fully taken into account in assessing domestic, commercial or industrial planning applications.

T 4 Improvement Areas 3 (Abbots Leigh) and 4 (Pill Precinct) should incorporate proposals for the protection and safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

T 5 The impact on local amenity of the re-opening of the Pill railway station (traffic, parking, business and residential activity) should be taken into account in the consideration of new development/redevelopment.

T 6 New development should be located so as to encourage walking and cycling to work (especially to school) and to ensure access to local retail and public services in Pill.

Community Actions

CA/T 1 Improvements to infrastructure (e.g. dropped kerbs and disabled parking) for older people and people with a disability should be made where appropriate.

CA/T 2 Parish Councils will explore the protection of verges and the prevention of pavement parking where they are considered to be a hindrance or hazard to pedestrians.

CA/T 3 (see also Her 1) A review of parking restrictions (including double yellow lines), should be conducted in relation to both Church Road/Manor Road in Abbots Leigh and the Precinct in Pill.

CA/T 4 Bicycle stands should be provided at appropriate locations (shops, school, health centre, public houses, bus stops, and businesses).

CA/T 5 The Parish Councils will pursue Active Travel initiatives across the Neighbourhood Area.

CA/T6 The Parish Councils will work with bus service providers to maintain public bus transport within the Neighbourhood Area

CA/T 7 The Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council will re-investigate the provision of a safety rail on the raised Lodway footway to ensure pedestrian safety.

7 LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY *(See also Background Paper 3)*

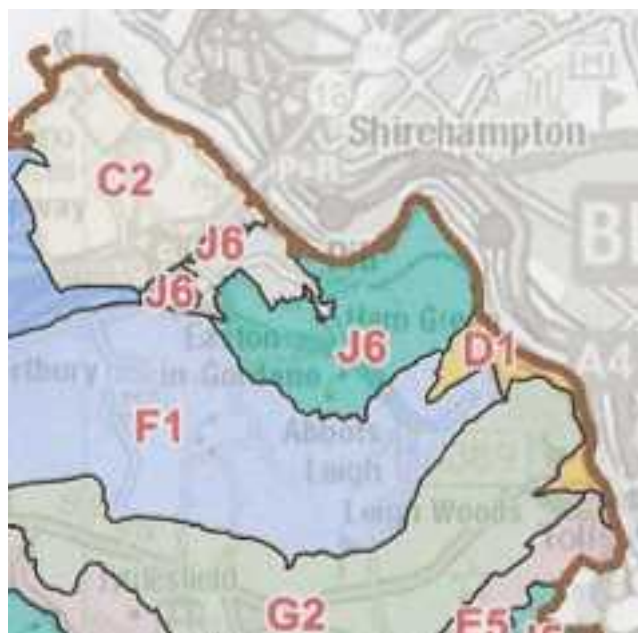
Primary Objective

Sustain and enhance the landscape, ecology and biodiversity of the area whilst protecting its environmental assets.

7.1 Topography, Landscape and Ecology

The Green Belt dominates the landscape of the Neighbourhood Area. Both the Pill Settlement and Royal Portbury Dock are surrounded by Green Belt and the whole of the remainder of the Area lies within the Green Belt. We fully endorse both the National Planning Policy Framework and the NSC Core Strategy that restate the importance of Green Belt land, not simply as a break between town and countryside but as a fundamental feature of the overall character of landscape and environment.

The Plan Area offers a varied topography from the Avon Gorge and the Abbots Leigh ridge downwards through woodland and pasture to the River Avon and the Severn Estuary³⁰ (see Map 9). This topography provides important landscape features and a combination of vegetation types. The range of habitats in close proximity one to another contributes to the sustainability of the ecological framework, the features of which differ from one end of the Neighbourhood Area to the other. Abbots Leigh (over 9 square kilometres in size) has a diverse ecology. This comprises major parcels of woodland, permanent pastureland, native hedges, old orchards, mature open field trees, meadowland and roadside verges, some farmland with agricultural grass, and a significant volume of fresh water at Abbots Pool. By contrast the Pill & Easton-in-Gordano areas have more farmland and small areas of pasture and open field surrounding the built-up settlement area as well as the fresh water of Ham Green Lake. The Royal Portbury



Map 9 Neighbourhood Plan Area Landscape Features

30 The Area includes Landscape Areas G2 (Failand Settled Limestone Plateau, D1 (Avon Gorge), F1 (Abbots Leigh Sandstone Uplands), J6 (Avon Rolling Farmland) and C2 (Portbury Settled Coastal Edge). North Somerset Landscape Assessment 2018

Dock with its estuarial and wetland areas stretches to the Severn Estuary. However, it is the combination of woodland, field trees, semi improved grassland, meadow, open farmland, hedgerow, orchards, ponds and streams that is crucial in providing shelter, feeding and breeding sites vital to the survival of many wildlife species.

The Plan area has much grassland on both farmed and public open spaces, offering important environmental benefits in addition to woodlands of which a significant part are ancient woods. There are half a dozen working farms within the area and a number of ponds in the woods and on the Avon River edge. There is a well-used and cared-for area of allotments in Pill. There are road and lane verges throughout the area. There are Local Nature Reserves at Abbots Pool and at St. George's Flower Bank. There are numerous valuable small meadows and flower banks, and in addition to several Historic England registered/unregistered gardens, there are many

private gardens which fulfil an ecological role and function. NSC Nature Conservation and Landscape Policies (CS4 and CS5) emphasise the importance of landscape and the 2018 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment³¹ 'identifies the open land stretching between the back of Crockerne Drive and Brookside to the A369 as of high landscape sensitivity.

The Neighbourhood Area supports a diverse range of habitats and wildlife, including a number of rare plant and protected species that are regarded as vulnerable nationally.³² The species of local conservation concern include dormice, water voles, white-clawed crayfish, otters, barn owls, horseshoe bats and a significant number of butterfly species including brown hairstreak, chalkhill blue and various species of fritillary. In the Avon Gorge Woodlands rare plant species include round-headed leek (Bristol onion), Bristol rock-cress, the endemic Bristol whitebeam and nationally notable plants such as lizard orchid, and adder's-tongue spearwort (found in only two sites in the UK).

7.2 Environmental Assets

Extensive **Woodland** supports a wide range of flora and fauna such as, fungi, lichens, bryophytes and flowering plants, also invertebrates, insects, amphibians, birds and mammals. Woodland (some 'ancient') stretches across the area – from Leigh Woods and Oak Wood, past Snake's Well and Fishpond Woods through to Hail's and Summerhouse Woods. The streams that run through the 'Bottoms' (Ox House, Vowles and Markham) feed a rich and diverse ecosystem.

Grassland, both species-rich and semi-improved grassland is valuable for wildlife of all kinds. Owls will hawk across it for small mammals like voles and wood mice and at night bats will hunt for insects. Deer as well as hares and stoats are regularly sighted.

Some of these grasslands are flowering meadows, cut for hay after the flowers have set their seeds and the vegetation dried and removed. This grassland adds enormously to the landscape and rural character of the area. Individual veteran trees are common in open fields supporting rich ecosystems as well as roosts for birds and bats.

Improved agricultural land exists in small quantities with some ploughed and re-seeded and offering grazing for sheep, cattle and horses. Such land can be valuable for foraging horseshoe bats because the dung left by animals may contain dung beetles and other invertebrates. There are also several small areas of arable land which are farmed organically to grow crops like wheat, oats or

31 North Somerset Council. Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, 2018 pp 45-47

32 Details of wildlife, flora and fauna are set out in Background Paper 3 and in the WildService Ecology Report

barley which can support skylarks, pipits and lapwing. The importance of food production to the local economy is referenced in Section 9.1 of the Plan and its significance in the response to climate change in Section 10.4.

Orchards add hugely to biodiversity. At Watchhouse Hill (a national Green Flag site) there is a 1.2 hectare orchard containing a range of traditional apple, pear and plum varieties with the occasional English oak and silver birch. There are also twenty acres of over fifty-year old, mixed variety cider apple orchards along Manor Road in Abbots Leigh that produce commercial fruit.

Grassland Verges are now one of the last refuges of many wildflowers. Verges are vital food corridors for wildlife, especially pollinators. The most striking verge within the Neighbourhood Area is St George's flower bank (designated Local Green Space) but elsewhere a number of verges are mown annually in the autumn, offering greater diversity of native floral species.

Streams and Ponds across the area form a network of freshwater environments. Markham Brook runs from Tanpits into Pill and then into the Avon. Abbots Pool (a second national Green Flag site) feeds a stream running, part underground, into the Ham Green Lakes and is an important spawning site for toads, frogs and newts

with regular monitoring counting up to 1000 toads migrating to the pool annually. Lodway Farm Ponds have breeding newts and frogs whilst the farm itself has deer, badgers, foxes and year-round resident toad and smooth newts. This area is an important wildlife corridor integral to toad migration.

A Wildlife Site and a Site of Nature, the **Ham Green Lakes** (part of the River Avon Site of Nature Conservation Interest) supports heron, kingfisher, moorhen, mallard, fish (eel, pike, carp) and great crested newts, whilst at St Katherine's School great crested newts are found in a small pond in the school ground. Glebe Pond in Easton-in-Gordano, managed by a volunteer group, is a small freshwater pool and home for frogs and newts, with the surrounding area home to tits, robins, herons, woodland flora, and fungi.

At the **Estuary and Longshore** end of the Neighbourhood Area, the intertidal and coastal habitats in the vicinity of the mouth of the River Avon (the Avon longshore) comprise mudflats, saltmarshes, marshy grassland and meadows with rhynes, ditches and ponds. These intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes around Royal Portbury Docks and the associated coastal wetlands support waders and wildfowl such as redshank, dunlin, curlew, shelduck, teal, mallard, common sandpiper and little grebe. Much of this area forms the Portbury SSSI.

7.4 Protected Areas

Within the Neighbourhood Area there are key areas of international, national and local significance designated for protection – RAMSAR wetlands, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Sites of Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves,

Registered and Unregistered Parks and gardens. There are also North Somerset Council recognised Wildlife Sites and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest. The Avon Gorge Woodlands and the Severn Estuary are designated under the EC Habitats Directive.

7.5 Connectivity and Biodiversity

The combination and inter-connectedness

of woodland, grassland, open farmland,

hedgerows, orchards, ponds, streams and river foreshore are crucial in providing shelter, feeding and breeding sites vital

to the survival of the numerous wildlife species of the area and to the sustainability of the biodiversity of their many habitats.

7.6 Environmental Management

There are many Open Spaces with wider community and social uses³³ which also have implications for the management and sustainability of the natural environment – walking and cycle paths, running routes, sports pitches, play areas, fishing lakes, churchyards, cemeteries. There is a diversity of land ownership and management including that of the National Trust, Forest England, the Crown Estate, the Bristol Port Company³⁴ and the District and Parish Councils, a number of agricultural, business and development landowners, and individual landowners. Across the several areas of farmland there is mixed, often absent,

landlord ownership, but management of many of the environmental assets of the area is carried out by voluntary/community individuals or groups, in some instances in collaboration with North Somerset Council. It is up to all landowners to engage with the protection and enhancement of environment and biodiversity. Areas for rewilding, tree-planting and provision of hedges and verges are all central to environmental management. Planning applications for new development should be required to include proposals for the sustainable management and maintenance of the immediate and surrounding environment.

7.7 Policies

Existing NSC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies address Landscape (CS5) The Green Belt (CS6), Green Infrastructure (CS9), High Quality Design (CS12), (DM 41), Nature Conservation (DM8), Trees and Woodlands (DM9), Green Belt (DM12).

Planning Policies

Env 1 (also HO 1) Development which adversely affects the Green Belt, high sensitivity landscape and habitat land above Crockerne Drive and Brookside will not be supported.

Env 2 The environment and wildlife (especially the salt marshes and the inter-tidal shore) of Royal Portbury Dock should continue to be protected and enhanced.

Env 3 Landowners should allocate areas for rewilding, plant native trees, shrubs, margins and flowering plants, protect the diversity of hedges and verges, and allow grasslands to develop as wild flower meadows.

Community Action

CA/ENV 1 (and CA/CC 2) Landowners – individual, public and corporate – are encouraged to protect the natural landscape (woodlands, parklands, grassland, hedgerows, streams and ponds) to increase resilience to climate change.

CA/ENV 1 (and CA/CC 2) Landowners – individual, public and corporate – are encouraged to protect the natural landscape (woodlands, parklands, grassland, hedgerows, streams and ponds) to increase resilience to climate change.

33 Open Spaces are discussed in Chapter 11

34 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan has no jurisdiction on development within the dock area, the Bristol Port Company has an important role in environmental management

8 HERITAGE *(See also Background Paper 4)*

Primary Objective

Respect, preserve and protect the history and heritage of the built environment.

8.1 History

The Area has a known Paleolithic pre-history and Roman and Anglo-Saxon roots, with a mention of Portberie (Portbury) and Lega (Leigh) in the Domesday Book. Through the Middle Ages much of the area passed in turn from the Crown through a succession of religious and secular baronial and manorial ownerships (Fitzharding, Berkeley, Norton, Trenchard, Miles) until the diverse pattern of current land and property ownership was established in the early twentieth century.

In terms of economic activity, the River Avon has been a focal point dating from the export of the renowned Ham Green pottery of the 12th century (hence Crockerne Pill). From the sixteenth century Pill has been a bustling community harbour, and latterly marina, providing a host of waterborne work associated with the development of maritime Bristol. This included boat building and repair, a busy quay, hobbler and pilots (as well as pirates). Much of this activity was generated by the loading and discharging functions of shipping held at the 'Hung Road'. Further upstream, the dock at Paradise Bottom supported the transport of celestine mined on the Leigh Court Estate. Today the Royal Portbury Dock provides the setting for a modernised maritime function on the Avon/Severn estuaries.

Away from the river, the land has historically been woodland together with agricultural crop or pasture land. Abbots Leigh was once devoted to the production of supplies for

St Augustine's Abbey in Bristol, and across the area (outside Pill) there remain a few longstanding farms.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the building of larger houses – for example the Manor House, Leigh Lodge, Abbots Leigh House and The Chantry in Abbots Leigh and Ham Green House in Ham Green. The construction of the Portishead Railway and the Clifton Suspension Bridge in the 1860s opened up the area to the wealth and ambitions of Bristol professionals. Further growth occurred across the area in the first half of the twentieth century but National Trust and Forestry Commission land ownership in Leigh Woods constrained the spread of Bristol, and extensive suburban development has largely been held in check since the 1950s by the designation of the Green Belt.

A considerable legacy remains from this heritage. The Neighbourhood Plan Area contains twenty-eight Listed Buildings, one registered historic park/garden, seven unregistered historic gardens and three SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest).³⁵ There are other unlisted historic areas (e.g. Church Road in Abbots Leigh and the old harbour area in Pill) which need protection from inappropriate development. The significance of these historic buildings, monuments and gardens is often unknown or misunderstood, both locally and by visitors. Each of the four settlements of the Neighbourhood Area – Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano – contributes to a shared community heritage which it is important to retain, but each settlement has its own particular history.

It is important to remember, however, that much of this heritage stems from the wealth created by historic landowners – amongst

35 A full list of historic/listed buildings is given in Background Paper 4 which also contains an Initial historical Heritage Statement

them Henry Bright of Ham Green and Philip John Miles of Leigh Court. Much of their wealth was built on the slave trade. The buildings they left can be appreciated for their architectural merit but how their wealth was created cannot be ignored or forgotten.

8.2 There is a long history to **Abbots Leigh** – Following the abolition of the monasteries Sir George Norton took possession of the Manor of Abbots Leigh and in 1580 built a new mansion. The Norton family and later the Trenchards held the property until 1811 when the estate was sold to Philip John Miles who built Leigh Court. The Miles family were forced to sell the Estate in 1915 and it was then broken up into separate holdings. From The George Inn along Church Road to Holy Trinity Church lie a succession of historic buildings, several listed.

8.3 Ham Green lies between Abbots Leigh and Pill. It has a long history dating from the Saxon period. For almost two hundred years from 1100 Ham Green pottery was produced and widely exported across England and Europe. The two decades 1710–1730, however, saw construction of the Queen Anne wing of Ham Green House, the gardens of Ham Green House and the Gazebo and Watergate (now all listed). The 'pleasure gardens' of the nineteenth century Ham Green Estate constructed by Henry Bright remain formally an unregistered park/garden. Much of the land, including Ham Green Lake, the field within which the Chapel Pill lane development is proposed and parts of Eden Business Park, was sold off in 1961 by the National Health Service. Orchard View is not part of the unregistered park/garden but does lie within the wider setting of the former Ham Green House.

A full planning application for the Chapel Pill Lane development will provide a Heritage Statement setting out the history of the former Bright Estate at Ham Green House (now Penny Bohn) and its heritage

significance. An Annex to background paper 4 provides an initial history/heritage statement.

8.4 Pill The original name Crockerne Pill means literally 'pottery wharf' and arose from the industrial-scale pottery nearby (see above). Little of the port settlement remains (although the stretch of land at the Avon is known as Waterloo Wharf). There are only two listed buildings in Pill.

8.5 Easton-in-Gordano There are a number of listed buildings in the immediate area and a group of roads in Easton-in-Gordano – Rectory Road, Priory Road, Old Priory Road, together with a cluster of listed buildings – seem to echo a settlement associated with the historic St George's Church. These buildings echo the historic connection between Easton-in-Gordano and Portbury Priory and probably lay on the route from Portbury to the Pill ferry.

8.6 In addition to listed buildings and gardens there are some special areas which need safeguarding against inappropriate development. **Church Road** in Abbots Leigh has some listed buildings but also a number of historic cottages dating from the 1830s. The older parts of **Pill** on and above Victoria Park and the Creek, do not have any formal listed status other than Mulberry House and the Watchhouse. Nevertheless, interesting older buildings remain as does much of the traditional layout of the harbour area. The lanes that drop down – Back Lane, Port View, Friendly Row, Star Lane – bring a reminder of the era of a busy and prosperous village of the nineteenth century. There are farms (e.g. Happerton Farm) where the traditional main farmhouse remains even if there have been conversions of outbuildings and barns.

In addition to listed buildings there are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at the Avon Gorge, at Ham Green and along the banks of the River Avon and the Severn Estuary. It is important, also to recognize the

contribution of streetscapes. Streets have character and qualities whether listed or not – Edwardian or 20th century housing make their contribution.

Local recognition of the importance of heritage lies with the Crockerne Pill & District History Society and the Abbots Leigh Heritage Group both recording much local material. The importance of history and heritage is fully recognised³⁶ and, whilst there have been modifications and extensions to many grade II listed buildings in the area, there has also been strong commitment to protection with the majority of listed buildings well shielded from negative change. The Neighbourhood Plan restates this commitment and the new developments proposed in the Plan (see Chapter 5) do not negatively affect the setting of any listed buildings. Proposals for a Conservation Area in Abbots Leigh are to be examined.

importance, whilst all along Church Road to the Church are a succession of important buildings. This heritage is increasingly threatened – parking, congestion, delivery lorries – and there are safety issues on crossing the busy A369 road which is overloaded and narrow at this point.

The Parish Council is examining the possibility of a Conservation Area in order to protect this heritage, an initiative distinct from, but closely related to, suggestions for traffic management and parking improvements. Such a Conservation Area would certainly include the cluster of buildings around the junction of the A369, Manor Road and Church Road (i.e. the George Inn, Leigh Lodge and the cottages nearby in Church Road and Abbots Leigh Road) but might run to the Church and beyond (see Map 10).

Improvement Area 3 Abbots Leigh Heritage

There are several listed buildings on Church Road and Manor Road (Leigh Lodge, Abbots Leigh House, the George Inn, the Priory) as well as unregistered gardens (The Glebe, Campfield, the Manor House). The Village Hall and nearby cottages are also of heritage



Map 10 Abbots Leigh Heritage Area (Manor Road and Church Road)

36 National Planning Policy Framework (pp 26-14). North Somerset Core Strategy (CS5). Development Management Policy (DM 4)

8.7 Policies

Existing NSC Core Strategies and Development Management Policies address Landscape and the Historic Environment (CS 5), Listed Buildings (DM 4), Non-designated Heritage (DM 7) and Nature Conservation (DM 8).

Planning Policies

Her 1 The design of new development and/or extension of existing development should be undertaken in sympathy with the distinctiveness and setting of the historic environment.

Her 2 The desirability and feasibility of a Conservation Area in Abbots Leigh should be fully examined.

9 ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT *(See also Background Paper 5)*

Primary Objective

Support the generation of local jobs for local people.

9.1 Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano are often perceived as areas of limited economic activity and jobs, functioning as commuter satellites with heavy peak hour traffic especially to and from Bristol. This fails to recognise the scale of the local economy and the number of local jobs. The 2011 Census showed 2,829 residents aged 16–74 actively engaged in economic activity (full or part time employment, self-employed or unemployed) with 1,238 residents inactive (retired, long term carer, sick or disabled). Of those actively engaged 54.1% were in full employment, 21.6% in part-time employment and 16.7% self-employed. Of industrial sectors, health and social work (14.0%), wholesale, retail and vehicle repair (13.5%), education (9.4%) and construction (8.5%) were the major areas of work for

local residents. Around 20% of residents work from home.³⁷

9.2 In mid-2019 there were 104 businesses within the Neighbourhood Plan Area,³⁸ The largest being **Royal Portbury Dock**. The Bristol Port Company estimates that Royal Portbury Dock accounts for around two thirds of the 10,000 jobs across the two docks (Royal Portbury plus Avonmouth) of which 600 are direct Bristol Port Company employees and the remainder in port and dock related businesses.³⁹

The Eden Business Park at Ham Green has 43 business sites providing over a thousand jobs and with 320 car park spaces and significant traffic. There are both major employers and smaller firms.

The **Old Brewery Business Park** provides office space in converted brewery premises for fifteen businesses which generate around 120 jobs. The Old Brewery offers accessibility to the M5, on-site parking, up to date and reasonably priced office accommodation and a pleasant 'out of Bristol' environment housing a gym.

37 See Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 2, para 3.2

38 A local count was taken in 2018 of businesses in operation. A full list is in Background Paper 5

39 The timing and specific location of work-shifts in the docks depends on the volume and type of port traffic and, crucially, on the tide. The level and timing of work at Royal Portbury Dock thus varies

The Pill Precinct. There are a number of retail outlets on the Precinct. A local business survey evidenced 21 business premises, with 12 leased, largely from Alliance Homes. Local employment was 67 with 20 male and 47 female jobs and 36 full-time/31 part-time jobs.

Elsewhere there is significant employment at the **Abbots Leigh Nursing Home** (78 jobs), **Penny Brohn** (80 jobs), **Leigh Court** (180 jobs) and **Freeways** (40 jobs). Education and Health provide further employment at **St Katherine's School** and **Crockerne Primary School** (over 150 jobs), at **Heywood Family Practice** (30 jobs), at **Avon Fire and Rescue in Pill** (16 jobs), and at **Brackenwood Garden Centre** (30 jobs).

There are also workshop clusters at Cross Lanes Farm, Markham Farm, Normans Way (in Royal Portbury Dockland) with individual businesses of various sizes and activities. Such places offer a flexible base for non-office-based businesses to start up and establish themselves.

Food production is also important in the Neighbourhood Area, making use of the open land which the Green Belt helps to protect. With six active farms there is considerable farmland grazed by dairy or meat livestock. The production of vegetable produce (as at the Pill Allotments, the Community Orchard or Leigh Court Farm) play a further – and increasing part. Food grown in individual gardens for local consumption will become more important. When the emphasis is on 'local jobs for local people' the role of food production contributes helpfully to sustainability.

Adding in estimated jobs across the Plan area – public houses, farms, garages, garden centres etc.– together with those working from, or at, home (200 residents), the total number of jobs in the Neighbourhood Plan

Area, excluding the docks, is estimated to amount to around 1,700. Royal Portbury Dock adds around a further 6,000–7,000.⁴⁰

9.2 As transport statistics demonstrate (see Chapter 6) there is much commuting in and out of the Area. The Neighbourhood Plan Area represents an active, open local labour market with around 8,000 job opportunities supplied in part by a labour force of almost 3,000 economically active residents. Taking account of what is known about travel to work patterns (again see Chapter 6) our estimate is that there are almost 1,000 local jobs for local people.

The Neighbourhood Plan Area is a good place for business – close to Bristol, with access to the M5 and a forthcoming rail link to Bristol Temple Meads station. Much business is stable and likely to be present for the long-term (e.g. at Royal Portbury Dock, in local retail and in agricultural related business), but there is also business and labour market 'churning' as businesses grow and decline, move in and out, and recruit or lay-off employees.

9.3 There is significant working from home (7% of those at work) and this represents a strongly developing sector of the local economy with economic, social and environmental benefits. The digital future will be one that facilitates connected social and economic life between public and private business workplaces and the home. Digital fibre connection of high quality to homes and workplaces is of growing importance with upgrading to 5G as soon as practicable. Support for home working – extensions for 'office' use, for example – are to be supported, but our concerns about inappropriate design standards evident in current conversions of huts and barns remain crucial (see 5.9 above). Equally the indiscriminate conversion of commercial properties

40 Fuller estimates of employment at Eden Park, the Old Brewery and the Precinct are provided in Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 5, para 2

to residential use can easily result in substandard accommodation.

9.4 Eden Business Park currently (October 2020) has vacancies, together with some undeveloped land. Local consultation suggested that this might be released for housing. The prospects for the economy are uncertain, but the Steering Group took the view that, whilst opportunities for housing should be kept under review, for the plan period to 2026 releasing employment land was inappropriate. The current North Somerset Core Strategy stresses the importance of safeguarding sites in existing economic use.

With post COVID-19 experience and enjoyment of the countryside and its environment there may be possibilities associated with visitors and eco-tourism. Welcoming visitors on bikes, on foot or on boats for a day trip to enjoy our footpaths and cycle paths, to visit farms, or to enjoy historic gardens would generate educational as well as recreational benefit. There is already a forest school in Abbots Leigh, the creek and marina at Pill might host trips out from Bristol, eco-tourism and agri-tourism might offer local employment opportunities. Initiatives which foster such activities will be supported.

One of the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan is to 'help create the conditions in which businesses can invest and adapt'.⁴¹ This includes 'supporting a prosperous rural economy and ensuring the vitality of town centres'. The proposed care home/housing development at Ham Green (see Chapter 5) is likely to provide up to sixty new job opportunities, a number of which are expected to be local, and this development is welcome on employment as well as health and housing grounds. Across the area there are several farms and agricultural holdings which offer potential for conversion to residential or business

uses. Residential conversion is covered by existing NSC policies but we would wish the potential for conversion to workshop or small business use to be supported.

9.5 Royal Portbury Dock, part of which lies within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, is a regional as well as a local asset. Bristol Port Company has particular land requirements which will be addressed in the new North Somerset Local Plan 38. Whilst there are no current plans for growth of the dock area within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the dock has important implications for employment, traffic and environment – especially were Freeport status to arrive. Growth elsewhere (e.g. Shipway Farm) could generate further employment growth and traffic on the A369. NSC Core Strategy (CS24) currently says that further expansion of the Port within North Somerset is not supported, that the next longer-term development of the Port will occur on the northern side of the Avon and that no further land for port development within North Somerset will be allocated. The Neighbourhood Plan welcomes the economic growth of Royal Portbury Dock, but we would wish the economic benefits to be weighed against any traffic, environmental or air quality problems this might cause.

41 National Planning Policy Framework Ch. 6 and 7

9.6 Policies

Existing NSC Core Strategy and Development Management Policies address Supporting a prosperous economy (CS20), Retail hierarchy and provision (CS21), Royal Portbury Dock (CS 24), Proposals for economic development (DM 47), Royal Portbury Dock (DM 49), Agriculture and land-based rural business (DM 51).

Planning Policies

Emp 1 The conversion, extension or improvement of domestic buildings (including digital infrastructure) for home working is supported.

Emp 2 The conversion and re-use of redundant buildings (including vacant or under-used agricultural buildings) for workshops or small businesses is supported.

Emp 3 Initiatives which create space for local start-up business, working hubs or internet hot-desking are supported.

Emp 4 Initiatives which draw in visitors or tourists and create local job opportunities are supported.

Emp 5 Changes of use outside of use class E would not be supported.

Emp 6 The redevelopment of land and buildings at Orchard View (Ham Green) as a mixed-use development with associated employment generation is supported.

Emp 7 Continued up-grading of digital infrastructure is encouraged across the area.

Community Action

CA/Emp 1 School/business links should be encouraged and more local job placements offered.

CA/Emp 2 Travel to work by public transport, by car-sharing and through the use of walking/cycling routes should be encouraged.

CA/Emp 3 Job vacancies and employment opportunities should be more widely advertised locally.

10 CLIMATE EMERGENCY *(See also Background Paper 6)*

Primary Objective

Respond to climate change and move towards a carbon neutral neighbourhood.

an Energy Plan together with a range of initiatives which might be taken locally.

Both parish councils (as well as North Somerset Council) have declared a Climate Emergency, recognising that action at local as well as national and international levels will be needed if proper protection of the natural environment is to be successful.

10.1 Local Action

This Chapter was informed by a consultancy report commissioned from the Centre for Sustainable Energy. CSE ran two workshops and provided a report which suggested

To give substance to these declarations, Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council has set up an Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group. The Group

includes councillors (from both parishes) and interested members of the community, and has established sub-groups to address renewable energy, carbon capture and biodiversity, food, and transport. These groups have begun work – projects involving community led tree planting and solar pv installations, for example – and further actions enabling more changes are planned.

The Neighbourhood Plan, and its three key principles – the need to protect the past, to address the future, and to react to the immediate present – reflect the urgency of a response to Climate Change. The Plan contains some policies which are being brought

forward at once, but there are others which will only evolve over time.

Sustainability – of past, present and future assets – is a core theme of the Neighbourhood Plan and, across the whole of the Plan, policies – for housing, transport, environment, heritage and community – have been framed in way which ensures that they will contribute positively to combating climate change and its effects – notably reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and/or the enhancement of local biodiversity. Many of these echo the most recent North Somerset Strategy on Climate Emergency⁴² and we welcome, and will seek to apply locally, the aspirations therein.

10.2 Renewable energy

Practical means to install sources of renewable energy will be investigated and, as far as possible, carried out. These may include ground-mounted solar arrays, especially on brownfield or industrial land and/or installation of renewable heat systems, such as air-source heat-pumps. The latter may be of particular interest in conjunction with solar pv systems.

There may also be potential for the establishment of wind turbines at appropriate locations. The Neighbourhood Plan Area offers locations which might be appropriate⁴³ (Royal Portbury Dock or the Avon longshore). Any such development needs to be considered in the context of the forthcoming Local Plan

2038. Approaches to encouraging renewable energy might also include the involvement of a community energy society or bulk purchase schemes to enable householders to access photovoltaic systems cheaply.⁴⁴

Encouragement and advice should be provided to householders, community organisations and the owners of business premises to improve the energy efficiency of their properties – the Solar Street scheme being a good example. New build properties should be required to be built to high standards of energy efficiency and, with only 43% of homes well insulated in North Somerset,⁴⁵ advice and encouragement will be given to householders at all income levels.

10.3 Carbon Capture and Biodiversity

Increasing the level of tree cover and biodiversity within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be encouraged through tree-planting schemes. New woodland or orchards and planting in private gardens and

public open spaces are encouraged. These will reflect the latest information about appropriate species, planting densities and best practice in the care and protection of new trees.

42 North Somerset Council. Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2019

43 See Regen SW. 2014. Resource assessment for wind and solar in North Somerset

44 See also para 10.6 below

45 Friends of the Earth

Other approaches to biodiversity should include allowing suitable areas of land to regenerate naturally together with better management of roadside verges and other public land to encourage wildflower growth. The example set by the St. George's Flower bank and the Abbots Leigh Verges Group

provide good examples. Encouragement and advice should be given to private landowners (including householders and organisations such as churches, schools, community buildings) to encourage both rewilding and creation of wildflower meadows and provision of suitable habitat to encourage wildlife.

10.4 Food

Steps will be taken to encourage both the local production of food and the sale of food that is produced in the neighbourhood area. The use of farmland for food production demonstrates that the Green Belt has an active economic function as well as environmental and planning functions. Farming - livestock and arable - remains important, but given the threat posed by climate change and other wider influences far beyond the neighbourhood area, the wider encouragement of market gardening and small-scale food production is needed at a more local scale to support our communities' food security. Local retail outlets selling 'weekly shop' food items will be encouraged, so residents are able to do their weekly shop without having to drive to neighbouring larger conurbations.

Encouragement and advice should be given to private landowners (including householders and organisations such as churches, schools, community buildings) to make use of available land for food production and/or establish raised beds outside churches or village halls. Schemes to ensure that food that is locally grown is used optimally and not wasted may include spare produce from the Allotments, from the Community Orchard, or from fruit trees in private gardens together with work with local shops to increase the amount of food sold grown relatively close to the Plan Area. Pill and Easton celebrate 10 years as a FairTrade village this year and the aim is to continue and extend this work and particularly to emphasise the environmental advantages of Fair Trade, including approaches to agriculture that both combat climate change and help reduce its impact on crops.

10.5 Transport

In addition to encouragement of the use of public transport and Active Travel (walking and cycling), the Plan recognises the growing importance of the adoption of electric vehicles (see also Chapter 6). Practical measures could include

encouragement of the formation of car sharing clubs, provision of community transport, improvements to the availability, reliability, frequency and cost of public transport, and improvement of facilities for walking and cycling.

10.6 Pollution

Road Traffic Emissions The A369 generates the third highest level of air pollution (NOx emissions) in North Somerset and a central

aim of transport policy is to bring reductions in carbon emissions from traffic making it easier for people to walk, cycle and enjoy

outdoor recreation. The main pollutant measured by NSC locally is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) originating primarily from road traffic emissions. The level of air quality is the third poorest annual level in North Somerset and increases in road traffic emissions should be avoided (see also para 6.8 above).

Pollution is a major concern along the A369, but concerns were expressed in consultation that air pollution levels around the M5 and Junction 19 were severe and that monitoring should be extended to give better coverage. Traffic and transport issues are included within the possible actions being considered by the Bristol Port Company as part of an Air Quality Strategy consultation.⁴⁶ The prospect of a Port Sustainable Transport Plan, together with work towards the reduction of emissions from traffic, less-polluting means of getting to and from work, and discouragement of road based freight movements, would be beneficial to the whole Neighbourhood Area. A range of other initiatives relating to the Port Estate are welcome – energy efficiency and conservation, opportunities

for renewable energy (including solar panels and wind turbines), green infrastructure, dust management – which would all contribute to a more sustainable carbon-neutral development of the port.⁴⁷ The Parish Councils' plan to maintain contact with Bristol Port Company on air quality as well as environmental issues.

Light Pollution The inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light – can be noted in the Neighbourhood Area. The north-western sky can be seen illuminated by the combined effects of the M5 motorway, the motorway services, the Avon bridge and the port complex, whilst within the Area a number of sports grounds make use of artificial light. While modern LED lamps are energy efficient, they emit light on a broad spectrum. This can disrupt the natural cycles of both wildlife and humans as well as hindering appreciation of views of the night skies. The planning system should seek to influence and control development lighting schemes in order to minimise/reduce light pollution in the neighbourhood plan area.

10.7 Flood Risk⁴⁸

Flooding has long been not only a risk but an actuality along the River Avon, with Pill in particular subject to significant flooding. Indeed, much of the Neighbourhood Plan Area lies within flood risk zones. Climate Change will increase these risks, but flood control is not simply a Neighbourhood Area issue and extends to rivers and the coastline across North Somerset. Existing protection along the Avon may need to be reinforced from Pill down the longshore to the Estuary (including parts of Royal Portbury Dock. We welcome the joint initiative by Bristol city council and the environment agency that

existing defences at Pill need to be upgraded although disappointed that such work may not be required until 2065. We feel that it is essential that river and coastal flood policies and practice are reconsidered in the new North Somerset Local Plan 2038 Measures to reduce flooding risk and minimize storm run-off such as planting trees would be welcome. More locally there is potential for reducing run-off and members of the community should be encouraged to incorporate rainwater harvesting and where possible incorporate permeable surfaces for driveways and gardens.

46 The Bristol Port company: Air Quality Strategy, Initial public consultation, February 2020

47 Air quality and green infrastructure are also covered in Chapter 5 (para 6.8) and Chapter 7 (paras 7.3-7.4)

48 See National Planning Policy Framework Section 14, paras 155-169; also North Somerset Council Core Strategy CS 3 and Development Management Policy DM 1

10.8 Policies

Existing North Somerset Core Strategy and Development Management Policies already in place include: Addressing climate change and carbon reduction (CS 1), Delivering sustainable design (CS 2), Environmental impacts and flood risk management (CS 32), Flooding and Drainage (DM 1), Trees and Woodlands (DM 5), High Quality Design and place-making (DM 32), Local Centres (DM62).

Planning Policies

CC 1 Land allocations and management which enhance carbon capture and ecological biodiversity are welcomed.

CC 2 Proposals for the development of new housing, extensions to dwellings or business premises, will be particularly supported where they are designed to generate as

much of their energy as reasonably feasible from renewable sources.

CC 3 New development should establish lighting schemes which minimize light pollution where possible.

CC 4 The establishment of local wind-turbine generation capacity should be pursued.

CC 5 Planning applications which incorporate rainwater harvesting and do not increase urban run-off are supported.

CC 6 Initiatives which would benefit from the use of land or buildings for the local production of food are welcome.

CC 7 Initiatives which would benefit from the use of land or buildings for the local production of food are welcome.

11 COMMUNITY ASSETS AND FACILITIES

Primary Objective

Protect, maintain and enhance Open Spaces, Rights of Way and pathways for walking and cycling.

Celebrate and sustain the strengths, cohesion and inclusion of the diverse communities of the area.

11.1 Community Organisations

Sustaining the longstanding sense of identity and community is a key aim of the strong network of community organisations – with over fifty active groups in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and a further eight groups in Abbots Leigh.⁴⁹

In Pill there are women's, men's and mixed organisations addressing a range of age groups. Groups meet for sport and exercise, culture and arts, music and dance, and simply 'getting together' for coffee, tea or lunch. There is strong support for younger children and older people. The Community Forum supports many of these local groups through the award of grants funded with support from the parish council. There are also important community wide events – the monthly Community Market, the annual Pill Rag, an annual music festival, the annual Regatta, the Orchard Wassail, Arts Festival, Christmas Lights and Pill in Bloom. The long-standing historic churches of the area – Holy Trinity, Christ Church, the Methodist Church, and St. George's play an important part in sustaining community welfare.

⁴⁹ Details of community organisations and their use of community buildings is given in an Appendix to Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 8

In Abbots Leigh there are a number of similar groups – exercise, heritage, wildlife, artists. All residents are members of the Civic Society which runs a programme of

village events throughout the year – New Year’s Brunch, Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Drinks Party, Festival in the Field, Bonfire Night, and Children’s Christmas Party.

11.2 Community Infrastructure

Buildings: Activities such as those listed above are held in a range of community spaces which include Abbots Leigh Village Hall, Lodway Cricket Club, Pill Methodist Church Hall, Miller’s Close, Pill Community Centre, Salvation Army Hall, St. John Ambulance Hall, St George’s Church Hall (and Scout Hut), and Pill Memorial Club. These community spaces are under varying ownership and management, have varied levels of space and facilities, and operate under varying financial arrangements. The Community Centre is owned by Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council. The Village Hall in Abbots Leigh is owned and run by the Parish Council with a resident caretaker. Most buildings are used regularly, some several days a week, the Pill Memorial Club throughout the day.

The Community Centre lies within the old 1843 school building. It is the most heavily used space in the area in terms of the range of organisations. The Centre is the home for the monthly market, a weekly café and play group and the Youth Club, together with providing space for a wide range of community activities. There are rooms for meetings or public events. Adjoining the Community Centre is Christ Church, also a useful space for local events and meetings. Ideas have emerged about the potential redevelopment of the two buildings and their integration into a smaller church, community centre and café, with some housing fitted into a multi-use community hub. The Parish Church Council and the Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council are asked to investigate any long-term development possibilities.

11.3 Other Community Services:

Several of the pubs, including the Memorial Club, serve meals. There is a café at Brackenwood Garden Centre and Penny Brohn, whilst St Katherine’s School offers a weekly evening restaurant meal during term time in their hospitality training room. This is the only public restaurant in the UK run by a secondary school.

There are other parts of the Neighbourhood Area where local services are available, one with a doctors’ surgery, garage and hardware shop, another with a second Co-operative store and the anticipated new rail station. There are three churches and six public houses across Pill & Easton-in-Gordano but no community services in Abbots Leigh other than Holy Trinity Church and the George Inn.

11.4 Communication

There are a variety of channels of communication which support the exchange of information across communities. Both parish councils have notice boards, a web-site, a monthly newsletter – the Pill Village

Voice and the Abbots Leigh Link, both delivered to all households. There is a widely used Pill Facebook group (the Daily Pill) with over 3,000 subscribers posting news, sharing information and inviting comment and



Map 11 Open Spaces: Pill and Easton-in-Gordano



Map 12 Open Spaces: Abbots Leigh

discussion. The windows of the Post Office and the Resource Centre as well as telegraph poles are widely used to post messages. These various media outlets carry parish news, dates and venues of community meetings, and requests for assistance of all kinds. Their regularity and reliability do much to sustain community cohesion.

The digital future will be one that makes full or part-time working from home even more normal than it has become under COVID-19. Social and economic connectivity and digital fibre connection of high quality to home and workplace (FTTP) will continue to be of growing importance. The planning system needs to be fully supportive of the new normal home-based employment.

11.5 Open Space

There is much highly valued public open space within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, some of it jointly run by North Somerset Council, the Parish Councils and/or community groups. Such spaces across the Area are well used, valued and contribute to community wellbeing offering provision for recreational and leisure use and generating environmental and biodiversity benefits (see Maps 11 and 12).

Local Green Space (NSC designated)

Watchhouse Hill (with Green Flag status) incorporating the Pill Community Orchard is owned by North Somerset Council and managed by a joint council/community

committee. (10.29 ha); used for recreation and events.

Abbots Pool is a woodland area for walking, cycling and fishing, jointly owned by NSC, Forest England and managed by a joint NSC/community committee. It is a recognised Local Green Space with Green Flag status. (3.91 ha).

Hardwick Road (formally called Yew Tree Gardens) in Easton-in-Gordano is an NSC owned play space and a football pitch. (2.3 ha).

Crockerne Pill (often referred to as Waterloo Wharf); a grassed area adjoining the historic pill leading to the River Avon (0.29 ha); used for picnics and events.

Victoria Park in Pill running from the precinct to Pill Creek, is jointly owned by North Somerset Council and the Parish Council. (0.221 ha).

Macrae Road land north of Macrae Road, Ham Green (1.16 ha.); used for recreation.

Community Leisure, Recreation and Play Spaces

Leigh Woods Forestry England/National Trust open access walking and cycling land including the Avon Gorge SSSI and Paradise Bottom arboretum.

Priory Fields, including the designated Town Green lying between Pill and Martcombe is widely used for walking. (designated as a Town Green).

The Old School Field in Abbots Leigh is leased to Abbots Leigh Parish Council by North Somerset Council and is used for leisure, play and village events.

Brookside in Pill is similarly owned by North Somerset Council and managed by Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council.

The Pill Foreshore offers views of the River Avon with a recently improved riverside walking opportunity.

Jenny's Meadow An SSSI Grassland and Meadow site close to the Avon belongs to Pill & Easton-in-Gordano Parish Council but is managed by a small group of volunteers.

Court Hay Field, owned by St. George's Church is the home of St George's Football

Club, with the Pavilion and Scout Hut leased by the Trustees of the Court Hay Trust.

Easton-in-Gordano cricket club (located at Martcombe in Easton, and Lodway **cricket club** (in Ham Green),

The 5-acre **Pill Allotments** site is owned by the Parish Council but is let to and managed by the Pill Allotments Association under a lease which is reviewed and renewed every ten years. There are 124 plots of varying sizes, rented to 94 named members/plot holders from the community.

All these Open Spaces are of value with regard to their contribution to the townscape, character, setting and visual attractiveness of the Neighbourhood Area and make an important contribution to the network of open spaces.⁵⁰ Development proposals affecting these spaces would have a detrimental effect on green infrastructure and, whilst ineligible for Local Green Space designation, should be protected and retained for community use. Proposals which enhance and improve existing community facilities and/or Open Space will be supported as will new facilities, providing they are compatible with existing neighbourhood uses.

Much of the land in Abbots Leigh along Beggar Bush Lane is devoted to sport and recreation – the new Bristol Bears rugby training ground, Cotham Park Rugby Club, Bristol Real Tennis Club, Clifton College Sports Ground, Abbots Leigh Cricket Club. This land is Green Belt and thus protected from housing development but there remains potential for leisure, sport and outdoor recreation.⁵¹

11.6 Play and Recreation

Our survey of community buildings highlighted that whilst there are a number

of facilities which support parents (mainly mothers) and young children, there are gaps

50 See NPPF para 114 and NPPG para.4.45

51 Subject to NSC Core Strategy CS 27

in what is available to older young people aged 15–25. The Youth Club fills a gap for all youth ages, but it is important that both indoor and outdoor play and recreation space is maintained and enhanced. Play and Recreation are also central to health and wellbeing (para 11.7 below) and offer support to mental health, social inclusion and community cohesion.

The list of Open Spaces (para 11.5 above) includes several sports facilities – Hardwick Road, Court Hay Field and Macrae Road as well as the two cricket grounds at Lodway and Martcombe and it is crucial to leisure and play opportunities for young people that these be retained. Greenspace at Victoria Park, Crockerne Pill, Brookside and Hardwick Road provide further play opportunities for younger children.

11.7 Public Services

Education

St. Katherine's Secondary School has 780 pupils with plans to grow to 1,000. Intake is from over 50 primary schools with St. Katherine's being first choice for parents locally, in neighbouring admissions areas and Bristol (from where 70% of pupils come). St. Katherine's is now one of three secondary schools in the Cathedral Schools Trust.

Crockerne Church of England Primary School in central Pill has become a member of the Kaleidoscope Academy Trust based in Weston. Crockerne has a nursery entry of around 50 and a pupil population of over 300. 8.5% of pupils are on free school meals and 11.6% have Special Educational Needs. Many pupils move on to St. Katherine's but some also to Bristol and to Gordano secondary sector.

Health and Wellbeing

Neighbourhood Plans can address health and wellbeing in a variety of ways – tackling pollution, encouraging healthy eating, improving access to open space, encouraging walking and cycling, designing health developments, supporting the use of public spaces and community buildings.⁵² Many of these activities are identified elsewhere in this Plan.

Heywood Family Practice has 6,700 patients drawn from Pill, Easton-in-Gordano, Abbots Leigh, Failand and Portbury. It employs 30 staff (largely part-time), including seven (part-time) doctors, a nursing staff of five, and also receptionists, dieticians, and admin and clerical staff. The Practice has become one of five in a new primary care network which will bring economies of scale, new specialisations and the employment of additional staff. Across the network social prescribers work to assist socially isolated patients in many ways where a healthcare professional is not required thus freeing up valuable time. Three staff offer outreach and contact with isolated patients (e.g. home visits, triage to services). In the same way the network plans to recruit physiotherapists, care co-ordinators and pharmacy technicians working across the network.

There is a dental practice on the Eden Business Park, an 80 bed Care Home in Abbots Leigh and a centre supporting people with learning disabilities (Freeways). One of the major projects proposed for the area is a new 60 bed care home at Ham Green.⁵³

Fire and Rescue

Pill Fire station, one of 21 stations in the Avon Fire and Rescue Service, is in a group

52 National Association of Local Councils 2019. *Neighbourhood Planning and Community Health and Wellbeing*
53 See also Chapter 5 Housing and Chapter 8 Economy and Employment

of five stations (Pill, Clevedon, Weston super Mare, Blagdon and Winscombe). Pill Fire station is crewed by fifteen retained duty firefighters, many holding full time jobs elsewhere. Staff must live or work within five minutes of the station bringing a strong community focus to work in and with the community. In Pill, the Fire Station is central to the village and there are close community links, not least because retained staff live locally.

Police and Community Safety

The Abbots Leigh and Pill/Easton-in-Gordano parishes lie within the Redwood beat of the Avon and Somerset Police Area. There is a police presence in the area but

no police station in Pill, with the nearest police station in Portishead. Crime rates in the Area are low by comparison with other parts of the police area. Nevertheless, there are local priorities – vehicle crime in Leigh Woods and anti-social behaviour in Pill (noise, harassment, nuisance, rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours, vandalism, graffiti) addressed in part by the issue of Community Protection Warnings.

In relation to planning and development, community safety is addressed through *Secured by Design*, a national police crime prevention initiative to reduce crime at the design stage and to introduce security into the built environment, for example through natural surveillance, landscaping and lighting.

11.8 Social Inclusion

The contribution of such public services is especially crucial in supporting the welfare of vulnerable, protected or sheltered residents. A number of the policies identified in this Plan – for housing, for transport, for employment and for community

(organisations and buildings) – will make public services more accessible for older people, for young children and for people with disabilities. The proposal for a new care home at Ham Green will meet the needs of older local residents both from



Map 13 Pill Precinct

the Neighbourhood Area but also from a wider population catchment across North Somerset. Making it easier to reach and use the Precinct is an important priority.

With some parts of the Neighbourhood Area displaying deprivation levels more severe

than any other parts of North Somerset outside Weston-Super-Mare it is important that planning policies take into account the incidence of social and economic deprivation and address the specific needs of vulnerable and minority groups.

11.9 The Pill Precinct

Improvement Area 4 The Pill Precinct

The Pill Precinct is a hub for the village and surrounding areas. It is often thought of as the forecourt in front of the Baltic Place shops on Heywood Road, but a wider definition used for the Neighbourhood Plan includes Pill Street, Bank Place, Victoria Park (an NSC Local Green Space) as far as the railway bridge and Mount Pleasant (see Map 13).

The Precinct is the nearest local shopping centre for the whole Neighbourhood Area and is a North Somerset Council designated 'service village'. It is felt by local people to be accessible, convenient, familiar – a place to do local shopping and to have a chat. Despite these advantages, however, the Pill Precinct has long been recognised as needing improvement. Community surveys (at the Pill Rag, through the Daily Pill, via a business survey) confirm the widely held view that the Precinct is tired, drab, outdated, untidy and needing modernisation.

The main Heywood Road is dominated by an unattractive brick frontage and Pill Street is a mess of untidy parking with an absence of greenery throughout. There is a lack of variety in the available shops and a perception that the two retail sites – Baltic Place and Bank Place – are disconnected. Pedestrians have difficulty in crossing Heywood Road to and from the Precinct,

and local consultation highlighted the need for an additional zebra crossing.

An attractive Precinct is crucial for local residents and for local business. Local stakeholders – the Parish Council, Alliance Homes, North Somerset Council and the local community – have come together to establish links through which the ownership and management of land and property across the precinct area can be reviewed and improvements planned and implemented. A review of the area has identified matters which can be addressed within a year, issues which require some thought and resources, and finally 'blue sky' ideas which may be possible in the longer term. The future has been explored through a local survey and also by a joint Alliance Homes/parish council/community 'walkabout.'

Key issues which emerged include:

- Traffic management, including parking on Heywood Road, Pill Street and Victoria Park.
- The absence of greenery, and the potential of green walls, flower beds and planters.
- Tidiness and cleanliness, together with the location and screening of bins.
- Improved linkage between the retail areas of Baltic Place and Bank Place.
- Opening up Pill Street, and Victoria Park.
- Better signage and local information boards

11.9 Policies

Existing North Somerset Core Strategy and Development Management Policies already in place address Supporting Healthy Living (CS26), Smaller settlements and Countryside (CS33).

Planning Policies

CAF 1 (and Env 2) The Open Spaces listed in 11.5 and shown on Maps 11 and 12 should be protected, maintained and enhanced. Proposals for development thereon should demonstrate that they would not hinder access nor harm amenity value.

CAF 2 Proposals for enhancement of the amenity and accessibility of Improvement Area 4 – the Pill Precinct as shown in Map 13 – will be supported.

CAF 3 Proposals for further sport/recreation uses on Beggar Bush Lane will be supported.

Community Actions

CA/CAF 1 Continued financial and other support to community organisations, the Community Centre and other community spaces should be sought.

POSTSCRIPT:

COVID-19 AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Coronavirus and lockdown inevitably put a temporary halt to the processes of Neighbourhood Plan preparation. Local consultation was extended to five months instead of six weeks. Momentum was lost, delay was a disappointment, and lockdown restrictions inhibited local debate.

Local services – shops, health centre, library, churches, pubs – were closed. Home-schooling replaced in-school education. With home-working the new norm the Eden and Old Brewery Business Parks and the Pill Precinct were quiet. Planning for new developments at Ham Green slowed. Community involvement was very limited.

In contrast the numbers of walkers and cyclists – local residents and visitors escaping Bristol – flourished. Leigh Woods, Watchhouse Hill and other open spaces became even more popular, whilst an overcrowded and unsafe Abbots Pool had to be closed for the summer.

Against these and other pressures the already powerful sense of local community and identity described in Chapter 11 survived and strengthened. Individuals and community organisations came together to offer comfort, support and resources to counter the social isolation and dependency of families in need.

Reflecting on the eight months from March to November 2020 the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has looked back at the original Vision for the Plan (see Chapter 4). This remains appropriate and the range of planning policies and community actions set out throughout the Plan are still fit for purpose. Above all the three key Principles underlying the Plan – Protection and Continuity, Resilience and Change, Cohesion and Collaboration have proved to be more relevant after the months of COVID-19 than they were in March.

Coronavirus has not gone away, but the Neighbourhood Plan sets the scene for development and change over the next six years. It also provides a local baseline against which the local implications of the North Somerset Local Plan 2038 can be assessed and taken forward. Many of the issues raised and proposals suggested in this plan will remain relevant to strategic thinking for the decade beyond 2026, but new challenges will emerge – ever-growing use of the countryside and open space, the cumulative impacts of climate change, reforms of the planning system, the need for both affordable and market housing, growth of Royal Portbury Dock and a possible Freeport. It is against these challenges that we will revisit and update this plan.

The collage of photos on the back cover is the product of a community project 'Views from the Footpaths'. Thanks go to all who contributed and to Liz and Peter Milner for bringing the whole display together.

Thanks to Ben Clark and Ellie Wilkinson of Bluemoon Design Studio and Kris O'Shea and Jane Miller of Quay Digital for their advice and support on design and printing!



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Views from the Footpaths





Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework



National Planning Policy Framework

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
by Command of Her Majesty

February 2019



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1. Introduction

1. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied¹. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
2. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan², unless material considerations indicate otherwise³. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.
3. The Framework should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes). General references to planning policies in the Framework should be applied in a way that is appropriate to the type of plan being produced, taking into account policy on plan-making in chapter 3.
4. The Framework should be read in conjunction with the Government's planning policy for traveller sites, and its planning policy for waste. When preparing plans or making decisions on applications for these types of development, regard should also be had to the policies in this Framework, where relevant.
5. The Framework does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects. These are determined in accordance with the decision-making framework in the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure, as well as any other matters that are relevant (which may include the National Planning Policy Framework). National policy statements form part of the overall framework of national planning policy, and may be a material consideration in preparing plans and making decisions on planning applications.
6. Other statements of government policy may be material when preparing plans or deciding applications, such as relevant Written Ministerial Statements and endorsed recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission.

¹ This document replaces the first National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012, and includes minor clarifications to the revised version published in July 2018.

² This includes local and neighbourhood plans that have been brought into force and any spatial development strategies produced by combined authorities or elected Mayors (see glossary).

³ Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Achieving sustainable development

7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs⁴.
8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
 - a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
9. These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11).

⁴ Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **plan-making** this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁵, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area⁶; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁷, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁶; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

⁵ As established through statements of common ground (see paragraph 27).

⁶ The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

⁷ This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 73); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years. Transitional arrangements for the Housing Delivery Test are set out in Annex 1.

12. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
13. The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.
14. In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided all of the following apply⁸:
 - a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;
 - c) the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 73); and
 - d) the local planning authority's housing delivery was at least 45% of that required⁹ over the previous three years.

⁸ Transitional arrangements are set out in Annex 1.

⁹ Assessed against the Housing Delivery Test, from November 2018 onwards.

3. Plan-making

15. The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.
16. Plans should:
 - a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development¹⁰;
 - b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;
 - c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
 - d) contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;
 - e) be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and
 - f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).

The plan-making framework

17. The development plan must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area¹¹. These strategic policies can be produced in different ways, depending on the issues and opportunities facing each area. They can be contained in:
 - a) joint or individual local plans, produced by authorities working together or independently (and which may also contain non-strategic policies); and/or
 - b) a spatial development strategy produced by an elected Mayor or combined authority, where plan-making powers have been conferred.
18. Policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic and non-strategic policies, and/or in local or neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies.
19. The development plan for an area comprises the combination of strategic and non-strategic policies which are in force at a particular time.

¹⁰ This is a legal requirement of local planning authorities exercising their plan-making functions (section 39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

¹¹ Section 19(1B-1E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policies

20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision¹² for:
 - a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
21. Plans should make explicit which policies are strategic policies¹³. These should be limited to those necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area (and any relevant cross-boundary issues), to provide a clear starting point for any non-strategic policies that are needed. Strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with through neighbourhood plans or other non-strategic policies.
22. Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption¹⁴, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure.
23. Broad locations for development should be indicated on a key diagram, and land-use designations and allocations identified on a policies map. Strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (except insofar as these needs can be demonstrated to be met more appropriately through other mechanisms, such as brownfield registers or non-strategic policies)¹⁵.

¹² In line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

¹³ Where a single local plan is prepared the non-strategic policies should be clearly distinguished from the strategic policies.

¹⁴ Except in relation to town centre development, as set out in chapter 7.

¹⁵ For spatial development strategies, allocations, land use designations and a policies map are needed only where the power to make allocations has been conferred.

Maintaining effective cooperation

24. Local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
25. Strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans. They should also engage with their local communities and relevant bodies including Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, the Marine Management Organisation, county councils, infrastructure providers, elected Mayors and combined authorities (in cases where Mayors or combined authorities do not have plan-making powers).
26. Effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.
27. In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these. These should be produced using the approach set out in national planning guidance, and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency.

Non-strategic policies

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.
29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies¹⁶.
30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

¹⁶ Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

Preparing and reviewing plans

31. The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals.
32. Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements¹⁷. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).
33. Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary¹⁸. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy. Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future.

Development contributions

34. Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.

Examining plans

35. Local plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are 'sound' if they are:

¹⁷ The reference to relevant legal requirements refers to Strategic Environmental Assessment. Neighbourhood plans may require Strategic Environmental Assessment, but only where there are potentially significant environmental effects.

¹⁸ Reviews at least every five years are a legal requirement for all local plans (Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).

- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs¹⁹; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework.
36. These tests of soundness will be applied to non-strategic policies²⁰ in a proportionate way, taking into account the extent to which they are consistent with relevant strategic policies for the area.
37. Neighbourhood plans must meet certain ‘basic conditions’ and other legal requirements²¹ before they can come into force. These are tested through an independent examination before the neighbourhood plan may proceed to referendum.

¹⁹ Where this relates to housing, such needs should be assessed using a clear and justified method, as set out in paragraph 60 of this Framework.

²⁰ Where these are contained in a local plan.

²¹ As set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

4. Decision-making

38. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Pre-application engagement and front-loading

39. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.
40. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.
41. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.
42. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.
43. The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.
44. Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every two

years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.

45. Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.
46. Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.

Determining applications

47. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
48. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:
 - a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
 - b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
 - c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)²².
49. However in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:
 - a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and
 - b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

²² During the transitional period for emerging plans submitted for examination (set out in paragraph 214), consistency should be tested against the previous Framework published in March 2012.

50. Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination; or – in the case of a neighbourhood plan – before the end of the local planning authority publicity period on the draft plan. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.

Tailoring planning controls to local circumstances

51. Local planning authorities are encouraged to use Local Development Orders to set the planning framework for particular areas or categories of development where the impacts would be acceptable, and in particular where this would promote economic, social or environmental gains for the area.
52. Communities can use Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders to grant planning permission. These require the support of the local community through a referendum. Local planning authorities should take a proactive and positive approach to such proposals, working collaboratively with community organisations to resolve any issues before draft orders are submitted for examination.
53. The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities). Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.

Planning conditions and obligations

54. Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.
55. Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Agreeing conditions early is beneficial to all parties involved in the process and can speed up decision making. Conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided, unless there is a clear justification²³.
56. Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests²⁴:

²³ When in force, sections 100ZA(4-6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will require the applicant's written agreement to the terms of a pre-commencement condition, unless prescribed circumstances apply.

²⁴ Set out in Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - b) directly related to the development; and
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
57. Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.

Enforcement

58. Effective enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. They should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where appropriate.

5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

59. To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
60. To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.
61. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers²⁵, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes²⁶).
62. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required²⁷, and expect it to be met on-site unless:
 - a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
 - b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
63. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount²⁸.
64. Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for

²⁵ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.

²⁶ Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

²⁷ Applying the definition in Annex 2 to this Framework.

²⁸ Equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings. This does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

affordable home ownership²⁹, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Exemptions to this 10% requirement should also be made where the site or proposed development:

- a) provides solely for Build to Rent homes;
 - b) provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly or students);
 - c) is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or
 - d) is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry-level exception site or a rural exception site.
65. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations³⁰. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need re-testing at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.
66. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area³¹, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

Identifying land for homes

67. Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:
- a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period³²; and

²⁹ As part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site.

³⁰ Except where a Mayoral, combined authority or high-level joint plan is being prepared as a framework for strategic policies at the individual local authority level; in which case it may be most appropriate for the local authority plans to provide the requirement figure.

³¹ Because a neighbourhood area is designated at a late stage in the strategic policy-making process, or after strategic policies have been adopted; or in instances where strategic policies for housing are out of date.

³² With an appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 73. See glossary for definitions of deliverable and developable.

- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.
68. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:
- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;
 - b) use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
 - c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
 - d) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.
69. Neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 68a) suitable for housing in their area.
70. Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.
71. Local planning authorities should support the development of entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home), unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority's area. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:
- a) comprise of entry-level homes that offer one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework; and
 - b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them³³, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework³⁴, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

³³ Entry-level exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement.

³⁴ i.e. the areas referred to in footnote 6. Entry-level exception sites should not be permitted in National Parks (or within the Broads Authority), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or land designated as Green Belt.

72. The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities. Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:
- a) consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;
 - b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;
 - c) set clear expectations for the quality of the development and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles), and ensure that a variety of homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community will be provided;
 - d) make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation (such as through joint ventures or locally-led development corporations)³⁵; and
 - e) consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining new developments of significant size.

Maintaining supply and delivery

73. Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies³⁶, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old³⁷. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

³⁵ The delivery of large scale developments may need to extend beyond an individual plan period, and the associated infrastructure requirements may not be capable of being identified fully at the outset. Anticipated rates of delivery and infrastructure requirements should, therefore, be kept under review and reflected as policies are updated.

³⁶ For the avoidance of doubt, a five year supply of deliverable sites for travellers – as defined in Annex 1 to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites – should be assessed separately, in line with the policy in that document.

³⁷ Unless these strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to require updating. Where local housing need is used as the basis for assessing whether a five year supply of specific deliverable sites exists, it should be calculated using the standard method set out in national planning guidance.

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
 - b) 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan³⁸, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or
 - c) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply³⁹.
74. A five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the appropriate buffer, can be demonstrated where it has been established in a recently adopted plan, or in a subsequent annual position statement which:
- a) has been produced through engagement with developers and others who have an impact on delivery, and been considered by the Secretary of State; and
 - b) incorporates the recommendation of the Secretary of State, where the position on specific sites could not be agreed during the engagement process.
75. To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan in line with national planning guidance, to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.
76. To help ensure that proposals for housing development are implemented in a timely manner, local planning authorities should consider imposing a planning condition providing that development must begin within a timescale shorter than the relevant default period, where this would expedite the development without threatening its deliverability or viability. For major development involving the provision of housing, local planning authorities should also assess why any earlier grant of planning permission for a similar development on the same site did not start.

Rural housing

77. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.
78. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this

³⁸ For the purposes of paragraphs 73b and 74 a plan adopted between 1 May and 31 October will be considered 'recently adopted' until 31 October of the following year; and a plan adopted between 1 November and 30 April will be considered recently adopted until 31 October in the same year.

³⁹ From November 2018, this will be measured against the Housing Delivery Test, where this indicates that delivery was below 85% of the housing requirement.

will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

79. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

6. Building a strong, competitive economy

80. Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation⁴⁰, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.
81. Planning policies should:
- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
 - b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
 - c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
 - d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.
82. Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

⁴⁰ The Government's Industrial Strategy sets out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK, identifies a number of Grand Challenges facing all nations, and sets out a delivery programme to make the UK a leader in four of these: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; future mobility; and catering for an ageing society. HM Government (2017) *Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future*.

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

84. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres

85. Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:
- a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
 - b) define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
 - c) retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
 - d) allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary;
 - e) where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre; and
 - f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.
86. Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.
87. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.
88. This sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

89. When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m² of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of:
- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
 - b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).
90. Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 89, it should be refused.

8. Promoting healthy and safe communities

91. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;
 - b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
 - c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
92. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
 - b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
 - c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
 - d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
 - e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
93. Planning policies and decisions should consider the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration. Local planning authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.
94. It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
 - b) work with schools promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.
95. Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by:
- a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate⁴¹. Policies for relevant areas (such as town centre and regeneration frameworks), and the layout and design of developments, should be informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies about the nature of potential threats and their implications. This includes appropriate and proportionate steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security; and
 - b) recognising and supporting development required for operational defence and security purposes, and ensuring that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area.

Open space and recreation

96. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.
97. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
98. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

⁴¹ This includes transport hubs, night-time economy venues, cinemas and theatres, sports stadia and arenas, shopping centres, health and education establishments, places of worship, hotels and restaurants, visitor attractions and commercial centres.

99. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.
100. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
101. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

9. Promoting sustainable transport

102. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
 - c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
 - e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.
103. The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
104. Planning policies should:
- a) support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
 - b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;
 - c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;
 - d) provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans);

- e) provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area⁴², and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements; and
 - f) recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields, and their need to adapt and change over time – taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the Government’s General Aviation Strategy⁴³.
105. If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:
- a) the accessibility of the development;
 - b) the type, mix and use of development;
 - c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - d) local car ownership levels; and
 - e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
106. Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of this Framework). In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
107. Planning policies and decisions should recognise the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities, taking into account any local shortages, to reduce the risk of parking in locations that lack proper facilities or could cause a nuisance. Proposals for new or expanded distribution centres should make provision for sufficient lorry parking to cater for their anticipated use.

Considering development proposals

108. In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

⁴² Policies for large scale facilities should, where necessary, be developed through collaboration between strategic policy-making authorities and other relevant bodies. Examples of such facilities include ports, airports, interchanges for rail freight, public transport projects and roadside services. The primary function of roadside services should be to support the safety and welfare of the road user (and most such proposals are unlikely to be nationally significant infrastructure projects).

⁴³ Department for Transport (2015) *General Aviation Strategy*.

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
 - b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and
 - c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
109. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
110. Within this context, applications for development should:
- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
 - b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
 - c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
 - d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
 - e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
111. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

10. Supporting high quality communications

112. Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).
113. The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.
114. Local planning authorities should not impose a ban on new electronic communications development in certain areas, impose blanket Article 4 directions over a wide area or a wide range of electronic communications development, or insist on minimum distances between new electronic communications development and existing development. They should ensure that:
 - a) they have evidence to demonstrate that electronic communications infrastructure is not expected to cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest; and
 - b) they have considered the possibility of the construction of new buildings or other structures interfering with broadcast and electronic communications services.
115. Applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should include:
 - a) the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college, or within a statutory safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome, technical site or military explosives storage area; and
 - b) for an addition to an existing mast or base station, a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission guidelines on non-ionising radiation protection; or
 - c) for a new mast or base station, evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure

and a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

116. Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

11. Making effective use of land

117. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land⁴⁴.
118. Planning policies and decisions should:
- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
 - b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
 - c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
 - d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)⁴⁵; and
 - e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well-designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.
119. Local planning authorities, and other plan-making bodies, should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership, using the full range of powers available to them. This should include identifying opportunities to facilitate land assembly, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, where this can help to bring more land forward for meeting development needs and/or secure better development outcomes.

⁴⁴ Except where this would conflict with other policies in this Framework, including causing harm to designated sites of importance for biodiversity.

⁴⁵ As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring back into residential use empty homes and other buildings, supported by the use of compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

120. Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated for development in plans, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan:
- a) they should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or, if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped); and
 - b) in the interim, prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.
121. Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:
- a) use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework; and
 - b) make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools and hospitals, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space.

Achieving appropriate densities

122. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
 - b) local market conditions and viability;
 - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
 - d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
 - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
123. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- a) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;
- b) the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and
- c) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).

12. Achieving well-designed places

124. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.
125. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.
126. To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.
127. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
 - a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.
128. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.
129. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life⁴⁷. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.
130. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).
131. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
132. The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

⁴⁶ Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties. Policies may also make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified.

⁴⁷ Birkbeck D and Kruczowski S (2015) *Building for Life 12: The sign of a good place to live*.

13. Protecting Green Belt land

133. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
134. Green Belt serves five purposes:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
135. The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions. Any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies, which should:
- a) demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
 - b) set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
 - c) show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
 - d) demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with strategic policies for adjoining areas; and
 - e) show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.
136. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

137. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy:
- a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
 - b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and
 - c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.
138. When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities 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. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.
139. When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:
- a) ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;
 - b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
 - c) where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
 - d) make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;
 - e) be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and
 - f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

140. If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.
141. Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.
142. The National Forest and Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns and cities, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. The National Forest Strategy and an approved Community Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within the National Forest and Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies for controlling development in Green Belts.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt

143. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
144. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
145. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:
 - a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
 - b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
 - c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
 - d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
 - e) limited infilling in villages;
 - f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.
146. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
- a) mineral extraction;
 - b) engineering operations;
 - c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - f) development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
147. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

148. The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Planning for climate change

149. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures⁴⁸. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.
150. New development should be planned for in ways that:
- a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and
 - b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.
151. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:
- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
 - b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
 - c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

⁴⁸ In line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.

152. Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.
153. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:
- a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and
 - b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.
154. When determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:
- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and
 - b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable⁴⁹. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

Planning and flood risk

155. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
156. Strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources. They should consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, and take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards.
157. All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account the current and future impacts of climate change

⁴⁹ Except for applications for the repowering of existing wind turbines, a proposed wind energy development involving one or more turbines should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the development plan; and, following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing.

– so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by:

- a) applying the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test as set out below;
- b) safeguarding land from development that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management;
- c) using opportunities provided by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding (where appropriate through the use of natural flood management techniques); and
- d) where climate change is expected to increase flood risk so that some existing development may not be sustainable in the long-term, seeking opportunities to relocate development, including housing, to more sustainable locations.

158. The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The strategic flood risk assessment will provide the basis for applying this test. The sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding.

159. If it is not possible for development to be located in zones with a lower risk of flooding (taking into account wider sustainable development objectives), the exception test may have to be applied. The need for the exception test will depend on the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed, in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in national planning guidance.

160. The application of the exception test should be informed by a strategic or site-specific flood risk assessment, depending on whether it is being applied during plan production or at the application stage. For the exception test to be passed it should be demonstrated that:

- a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
- b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

161. Both elements of the exception test should be satisfied for development to be allocated or permitted.

162. Where planning applications come forward on sites allocated in the development plan through the sequential test, applicants need not apply the sequential test again. However, the exception test may need to be reapplied if relevant aspects of the proposal had not been considered when the test was applied at the plan-making stage, or if more recent information about existing or potential flood risk should be taken into account.

163. When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment⁵⁰. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:
- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;
 - b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;
 - c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;
 - d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and
 - e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.
164. Applications for some minor development and changes of use⁵¹ should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments set out in footnote 50.
165. Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should:
- a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority;
 - b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;
 - c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and
 - d) where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.

Coastal change

166. In coastal areas, planning policies and decisions should take account of the UK Marine Policy Statement and marine plans. Integrated Coastal Zone Management should be pursued across local authority and land/sea boundaries, to ensure effective alignment of the terrestrial and marine planning regimes.

⁵⁰ A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.

⁵¹ This includes householder development, small non-residential extensions (with a footprint of less than 250m²) and changes of use; except for changes of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site, where the sequential and exception tests should be applied as appropriate.

167. Plans should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and not exacerbating the impacts of physical changes to the coast. They should identify as a Coastal Change Management Area any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast, and:
- a) be clear as to what development will be appropriate in such areas and in what circumstances; and
 - b) make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from Coastal Change Management Areas.
168. Development in a Coastal Change Management Area will be appropriate only where it is demonstrated that:
- a) it will be safe over its planned lifetime and not have an unacceptable impact on coastal change;
 - b) the character of the coast including designations is not compromised;
 - c) the development provides wider sustainability benefits; and
 - d) the development does not hinder the creation and maintenance of a continuous signed and managed route around the coast⁵².
169. Local planning authorities should limit the planned lifetime of development in a Coastal Change Management Area through temporary permission and restoration conditions, where this is necessary to reduce a potentially unacceptable level of future risk to people and the development.

⁵² As required by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
171. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework⁵³; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
172. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks

⁵³ Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.

and the Broads⁵⁴. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development⁵⁵ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

173. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 172), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

174. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁵⁶; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁵⁷; and
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

175. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts),

⁵⁴ *English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010* provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

⁵⁵ For the purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

⁵⁶ Circular 06/2005 provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

⁵⁷ Where areas that are part of the Nature Recovery Network are identified in plans, it may be appropriate to specify the types of development that may be suitable within them.

adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁵⁸ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

176. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites⁵⁹; and
- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

177. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Ground conditions and pollution

178. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:

- a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any

⁵⁸ For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat.

⁵⁹ Potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation and proposed Ramsar sites are sites on which Government has initiated public consultation on the scientific case for designation as a Special Protection Area, candidate Special Area of Conservation or Ramsar site.

proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);

- b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and
 - c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.
179. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.
180. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life⁶⁰;
 - b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
 - c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
181. Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.
182. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or ‘agent

⁶⁰ See Explanatory Note to the *Noise Policy Statement for England* (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2010).

of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

183. The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities.

16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

184. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value⁶¹. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations⁶².
185. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
186. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.
187. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:
- a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
 - b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

⁶¹ Some World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO to be of natural significance rather than cultural significance; and in some cases they are inscribed for both their natural and cultural significance.

⁶² The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making.

188. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

Proposals affecting heritage assets

189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
191. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Considering potential impacts

193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁶³.
195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
198. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
199. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible⁶⁴. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

⁶³ Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

⁶⁴ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

200. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
201. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
202. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

17. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

203. It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.
204. Planning policies should:
- a) provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;
 - b) so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously;
 - c) safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);
 - d) set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place;
 - e) safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material;
 - f) set out criteria or requirements to ensure that permitted and proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, taking into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;
 - g) when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction; and
 - h) ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place.

205. When determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy⁶⁵. In considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should:
- a) as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas;
 - b) ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality;
 - c) ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source⁶⁶, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties;
 - d) not grant planning permission for peat extraction from new or extended sites;
 - e) provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Bonds or other financial guarantees to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances;
 - f) consider how to meet any demand for small-scale extraction of building stone at, or close to, relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; and
 - g) recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.
206. Local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.

Maintaining supply

207. Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:
- a) preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment, either individually or jointly, to forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years' sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources);

⁶⁵ Except in relation to the extraction of coal, where the policy at paragraph 211 of this Framework applies.

⁶⁶ National planning guidance on minerals sets out how these policies should be implemented.

- b) participating in the operation of an Aggregate Working Party and taking the advice of that party into account when preparing their Local Aggregate Assessment;
- c) making provision for the land-won and other elements of their Local Aggregate Assessment in their mineral plans, taking account of the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties and the National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group as appropriate. Such provision should take the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria as appropriate;
- d) taking account of any published National and Sub National Guidelines on future provision which should be used as a guideline when planning for the future demand for and supply of aggregates;
- e) using landbanks of aggregate minerals reserves principally as an indicator of the security of aggregate minerals supply, and to indicate the additional provision that needs to be made for new aggregate extraction and alternative supplies in mineral plans;
- f) maintaining landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock, whilst ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is not compromised⁶⁷;
- g) ensuring that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition; and
- h) calculating and maintaining separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market.

208. Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals by:

- a) co-operating with neighbouring and more distant authorities to ensure an adequate provision of industrial minerals to support their likely use in industrial and manufacturing processes;
- b) encouraging safeguarding or stockpiling so that important minerals remain available for use;
- c) maintaining a stock of permitted reserves to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant, and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment⁶⁸; and
- d) taking account of the need for provision of brick clay from a number of different sources to enable appropriate blends to be made.

⁶⁷ Longer periods may be appropriate to take account of the need to supply a range of types of aggregates, locations of permitted reserves relative to markets, and productive capacity of permitted sites.

⁶⁸ These reserves should be at least 10 years for individual silica sand sites; at least 15 years for cement primary (chalk and limestone) and secondary (clay and shale) materials to maintain an existing plant, and for silica sand sites where significant new capital is required; and at least 25 years for brick clay, and for cement primary and secondary materials to support a new kiln.

Oil, gas and coal exploration and extraction

209. Minerals planning authorities should*:
- b) when planning for on-shore oil and gas development, clearly distinguish between, and plan positively for, the three phases of development (exploration, appraisal and production), whilst ensuring appropriate monitoring and site restoration is provided for;
 - c) encourage underground gas and carbon storage and associated infrastructure if local geological circumstances indicate its feasibility;
 - d) indicate any areas where coal extraction and the disposal of colliery spoil may be acceptable;
 - e) encourage the capture and use of methane from coal mines in active and abandoned coalfield areas; and
 - f) provide for coal producers to extract separately, and if necessary stockpile, fireclay so that it remains available for use.
210. When determining planning applications, minerals planning authorities should ensure that the integrity and safety of underground storage facilities are appropriate, taking into account the maintenance of gas pressure, prevention of leakage of gas and the avoidance of pollution.
211. Planning permission should not be granted for the extraction of coal unless:
- a) the proposal is environmentally acceptable, or can be made so by planning conditions or obligations; or
 - b) if it is not environmentally acceptable, then it provides national, local or community benefits which clearly outweigh its likely impacts (taking all relevant matters into account, including any residual environmental impacts).

* Paragraph 209a has been removed following the decision in *R (on the application of Stephenson) v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2019] EWHC 519 (Admin).

Annex 1: Implementation

212. The policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which this replacement Framework has made. This should be progressed as quickly as possible, either through a partial revision or by preparing a new plan.
213. However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
214. The policies in the previous Framework published in March 2012 will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans were submitted⁶⁹ on or before 24 January 2019. Where such plans are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan, the policies contained in this Framework will apply to any subsequent plan produced for the area concerned.
215. The Housing Delivery Test will apply from the day following the publication of the Housing Delivery Test results in November 2018. For the purpose of footnote 7 in this Framework, delivery of housing which was substantially below the housing requirement means where the Housing Delivery Test results published in:
- a) November 2018 indicate that delivery was below 25% of housing required over the previous three years;
 - b) November 2019 indicate that delivery was below 45% of housing required over the previous three years;
 - c) November 2020 and in subsequent years indicate that delivery was below 75% of housing required over the previous three years.
216. For the purpose of paragraph 14:
- a) up to and including 11 December 2018, paragraph 14a also includes neighbourhood plans that became part of the development plan more than two years before the date on which the decision is made; and
 - b) from November 2018 to November 2019, housing delivery should be at least 25% of that required over the previous three years, as measured by the Housing Delivery Test.

⁶⁹ For spatial development strategies, 'submission' in this context means the point at which the Mayor sends to the Panel copies of all representations made in accordance with regulation 8(1) of the Town and Country Planning (London Spatial Development Strategy) Regulations 2000, or equivalent. For neighbourhood plans, 'submission' in this context means where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority in accordance with regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

217. The Government will continue to explore with individual areas the potential for planning freedoms and flexibilities, for example where this would facilitate an increase in the amount of housing that can be delivered.

Annex 2: Glossary

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Air quality management areas: Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Ancient or veteran tree: A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Annual position statement: A document setting out the 5 year housing land supply position on 1st April each year, prepared by the local planning authority in consultation with developers and others who have an impact on delivery.

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Brownfield land: See previously developed land.

Brownfield land registers: Registers of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulations 2017. Local planning authorities will be able to trigger a grant of permission in principle for residential development on suitable sites in their registers where they follow the required procedures.

Build to Rent: Purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

Climate change adaptation: Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Coastal change management area: An area identified in plans as likely to be affected by physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion.

Community forest: An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme to revitalise countryside and green space in and around major conurbations.

Community Right to Build Order: An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Competent person (to prepare site investigation information): A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Decentralised energy: Local renewable and local low-carbon energy sources.

Deliverable: To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

- a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).
- b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

Design code: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Designated rural areas: National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

Developable: To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Development plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Edge of centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Entry-level exception site: A site that provides entry-level homes suitable for first time buyers (or equivalent, for those looking to rent), in line with paragraph 71 of this Framework.

Environmental impact assessment: A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects

on the environment.

Essential local workers: Public sector employees who provide frontline services in areas including health, education and community safety – such as NHS staff, teachers, police, firefighters and military personnel, social care and childcare workers.

General aviation airfields: Licenced or unlicenced aerodromes with hard or grass runways, often with extensive areas of open land related to aviation activity.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Habitats site: Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage coast: Areas of undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors.

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic environment record: Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

Housing Delivery Test: Measures net additional dwellings provided in a local authority area against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The Secretary of State will publish the Housing Delivery Test results for each local authority in England every November.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Irreplaceable habitat: Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and

veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Local Development Order: An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Enterprise Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local housing need: The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 60 of this Framework).

Local Nature Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Major development⁷⁰: For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Major hazard sites, installations and pipelines: Sites and infrastructure, including licensed explosive sites and nuclear installations, around which Health and Safety Executive (and Office for Nuclear Regulation) consultation distances to mitigate the consequences to public safety of major accidents may apply.

⁷⁰ Other than for the specific purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173 in this Framework.

Minerals resources of local and national importance: Minerals which are necessary to meet society's needs, including aggregates, brickclay (especially Etruria Marl and fireclay), silica sand (including high grade silica sands), cement raw materials, gypsum, salt, fluorspar, shallow and deep-mined coal, oil and gas (including conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons), tungsten, kaolin, ball clay, potash, polyhalite and local minerals of importance to heritage assets and local distinctiveness.

Mineral Safeguarding Area: An area designated by minerals planning authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

National trails: Long distance routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.

Natural Flood Management: managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

Nature Recovery Network: An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

Neighbourhood Development Order: An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which parish councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Neighbourhood plan: A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Non-strategic policies: Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

Older people: People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Original building: A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Outstanding universal value: Cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations. An individual Statement of Outstanding Universal Value is agreed and adopted by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for each World Heritage Site.

People with disabilities: People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Permission in principle: A form of planning consent which establishes that a site is suitable for a specified amount of housing-led development in principle. Following a grant of permission in principle, the site must receive a grant of technical details consent before development can proceed.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation: A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Playing field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated.

Priority habitats and species: Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ramsar sites: Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally

and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Safeguarding zone: An area defined in Circular 01/03: *Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas*, to which specific safeguarding provisions apply.

Self-build and custom-build housing: Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Special Areas of Conservation: Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

Special Protection Areas: Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

Site investigation information: Includes a risk assessment of land potentially affected by contamination, or ground stability and slope stability reports, as appropriate. All investigations of land potentially affected by contamination should be carried out in accordance with established procedures (such as BS10175 Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice).

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Spatial development strategy: A plan containing strategic policies prepared by a Mayor or a combined authority. It includes the London Plan (prepared under provisions in the Greater London Authority Act 1999) and plans prepared by combined authorities that have been given equivalent plan-making functions by an order made under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (as amended).

Stepping stones: Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Strategic environmental assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic policies: Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policy-making authorities: Those authorities responsible for producing strategic policies (local planning authorities, and elected Mayors or combined authorities, where this power has been conferred). This definition applies whether the authority is in the process of producing strategic policies or not.

Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Transport assessment: A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and measures that will be needed deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement: A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel plan: A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and is regularly reviewed.

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

CORRECTION SLIP

Title: National Planning Policy Framework

Session: 2017/2019

CP 48

ISBN: 978-1-5286-1033-9

Laid before Parliament on 19 February 2019

Correction:

On 23 May 2019 the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government issued a Written Ministerial Statement to remove paragraph 209a from the revised National Planning Policy Framework following a legal judgment.

In the light of this the following text should not appear: ‘recognise the benefits of on-shore oil and gas development, including unconventional hydrocarbons, for the security of energy supplies and supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy; and put in place policies to facilitate their exploration and extraction;’

The remainder of paragraph 209 is unaffected.

Dd June 2019



MetroWest+

Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

TR040011

Applicant: North Somerset District Council

2.45 to 2.46 - Ham Green Highway Works and Pill Tunnel Eastern Portal Compound Plans

**The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009, regulation 5(2)(o)
Planning Act 2008**

Author: CH2M

Date: November 2019



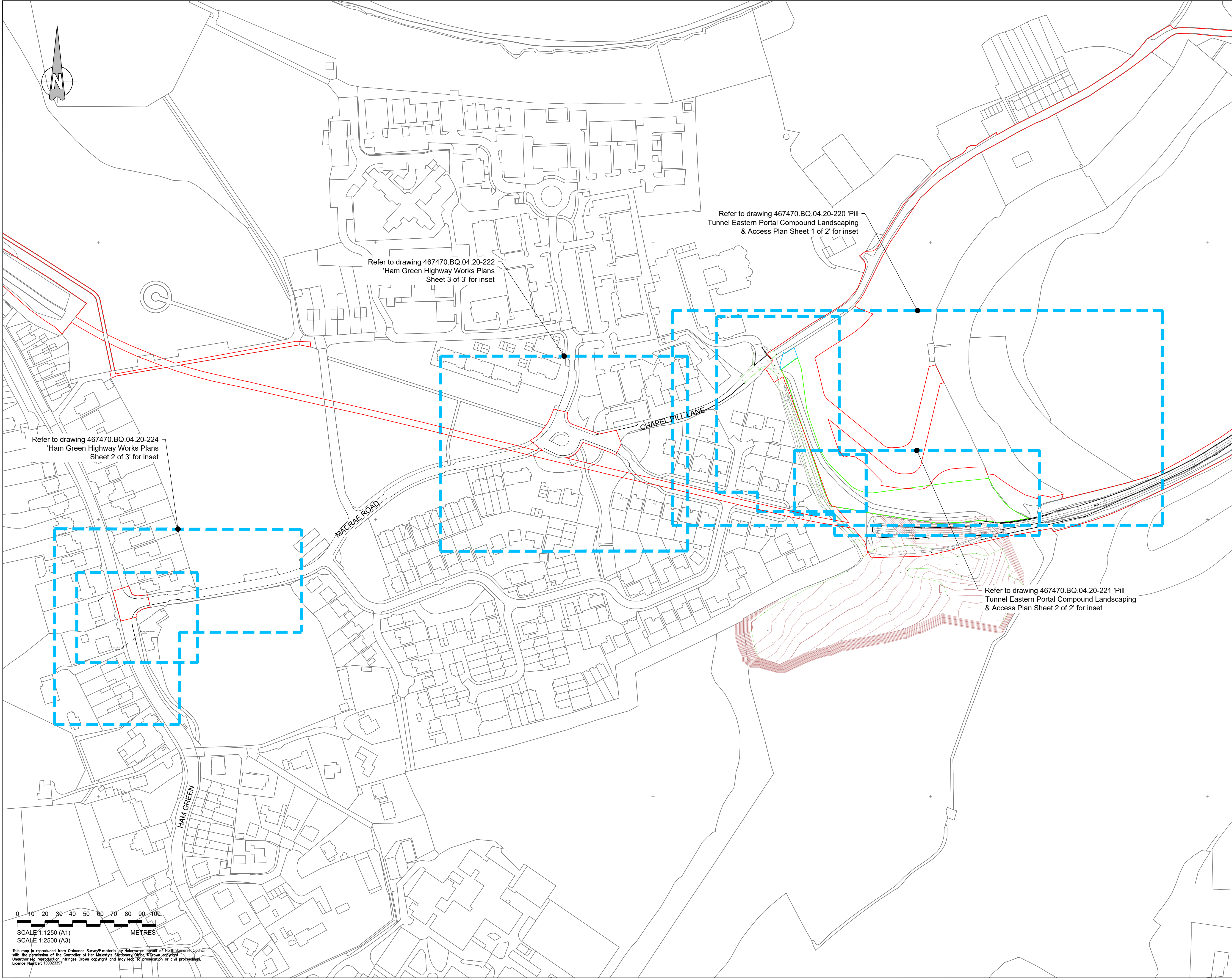
Document Index

2.45	Ham Green Highway Works Plans	The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009, regulation 5(2)(o)	467470.BQ.04.20-222-224 Rev E
2.46	Pill Tunnel Eastern Portal Compound, Landscaping and Access Plan	The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009, regulation 5(2)(o)	467470.BQ.04.20-220-221 Rev U

DO NOT SCALE. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant Architects, Engineers and Specialist Manufacturer's drawings and specifications. If in doubt please consult the Engineer.

Notes:
1. All dimensions are in metres unless noted otherwise.

KEY:
Order Limits



Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-224 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 2 of 3' for inset

Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-222 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 3 of 3' for inset

Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-220 'Pill Tunnel Eastern Portal Compound Landscaping & Access Plan Sheet 1 of 2' for inset

Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-221 'Pill Tunnel Eastern Portal Compound Landscaping & Access Plan Sheet 2 of 2' for inset

D	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/10/2019	Road names added and minor amendments
C	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/07/2019	Drawing order revised & red line boundary added
B	DHP	KS	ADL	04/10/2017	Title amendments
A	ECF	AL	AL	20/10/2016	Red line boundary added Minor amendments
Rev	By	Chkd	Apprvd	Date	Description



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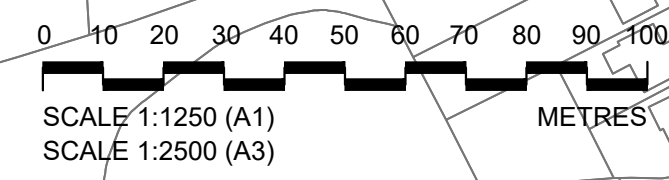
Project: **PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE
(METROWEST PHASE 1)**

Drawing: **HAM GREEN HIGHWAY
WORKS PLANS
SHEET 1 OF 3**

Drawn by: ADS Date: 10/11/2015
Checked by: AL Date: 12/11/2015
Approved by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

Drawing No. **467470.BQ.04.20-223** Revision **D**

Drawing Scale: 1:1250 @ A1 or 1:2500 @ A3



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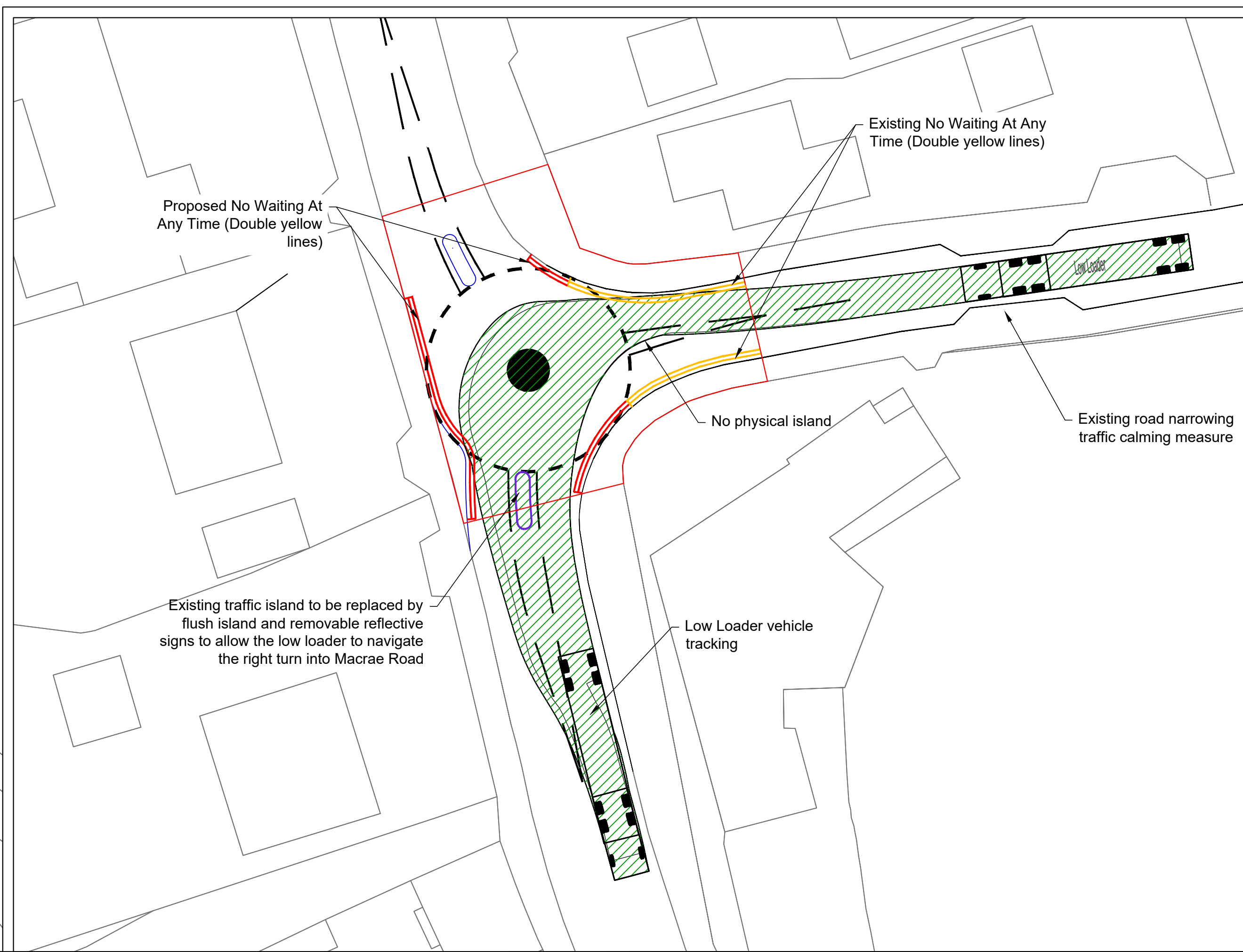
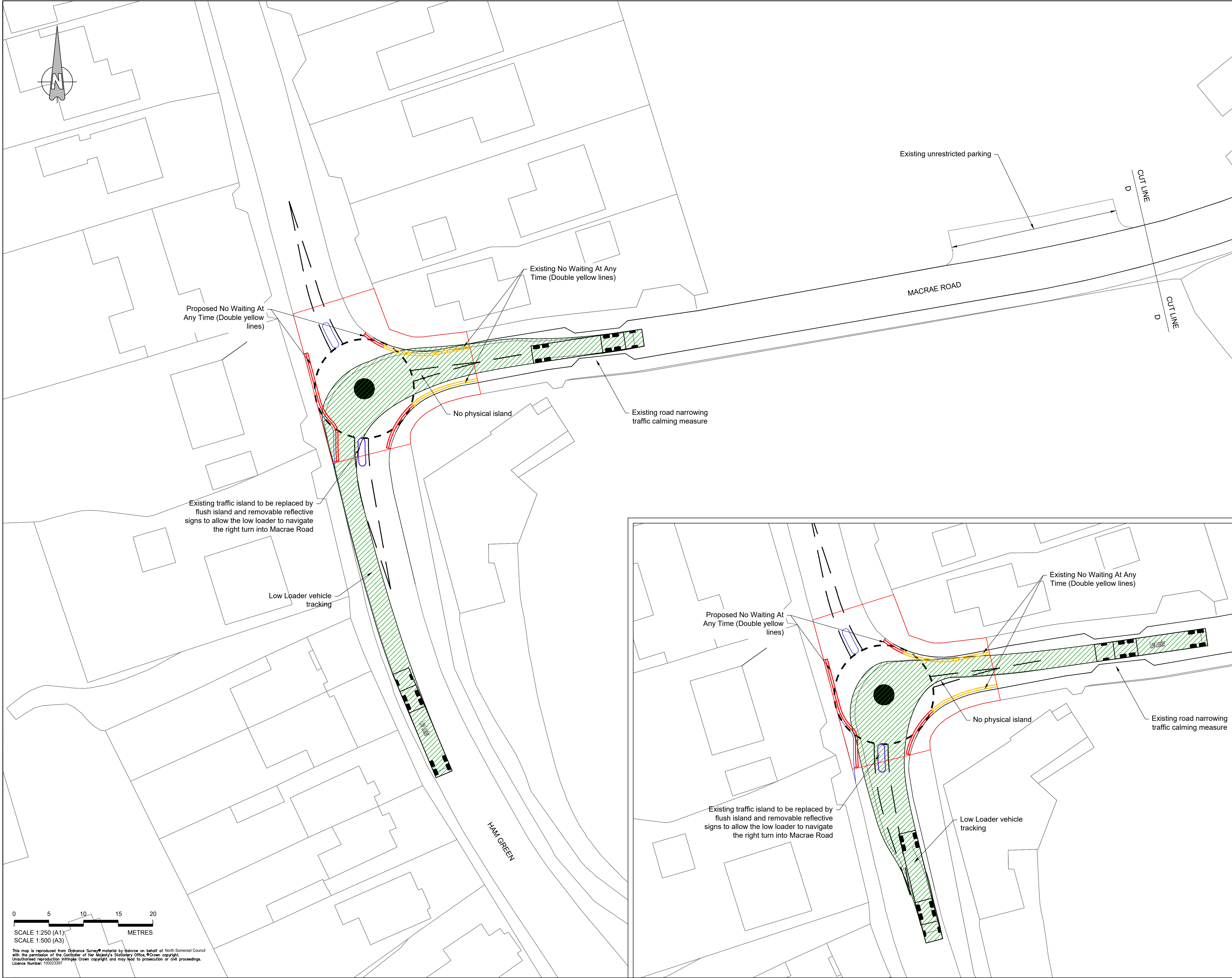
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DO NOT SCALE. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant Architects, Engineers and Specialist Manufacturer's drawings and specifications. If in doubt please consult the Engineer.

- Notes:**
- All dimensions are in metres unless noted otherwise.
 - Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-223 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 1 of 3' for Key Plan.

KEY:

— Order Limits



Rev	By	Chkd	Apprd	Date	Description
E	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/10/2019	Proposed TRVs added and minor amendments
D	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/07/2019	Drawing order revised & red line boundary added
C	DHP	KS	ADL	04/10/2017	Title amendments
B	DHP	ADS	ADL	15/09/2017	Minor amendments
A	ECF	AL	AL	21/01/2016	Red line boundary added Minor amendments



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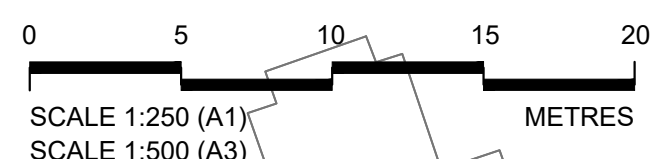
Project **PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE
 (METROWEST PHASE 1)**

Drawing **HAM GREEN HIGHWAY
 WORKS PLANS
 SHEET 2 OF 3**

Drawn by: ADS Date: 10/11/2015
 Checked by: AL Date: 12/11/2015
 Approved by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

Drawing No. **467470.BQ.04.20-224** Revision **E**

Drawing Scale: 1:250 @ A1



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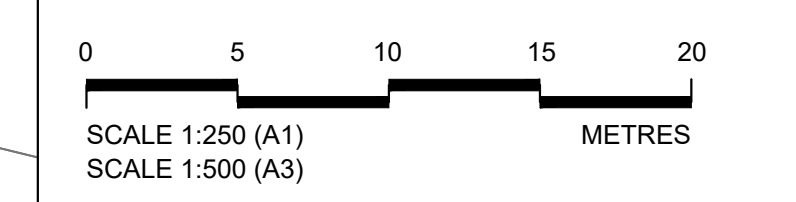
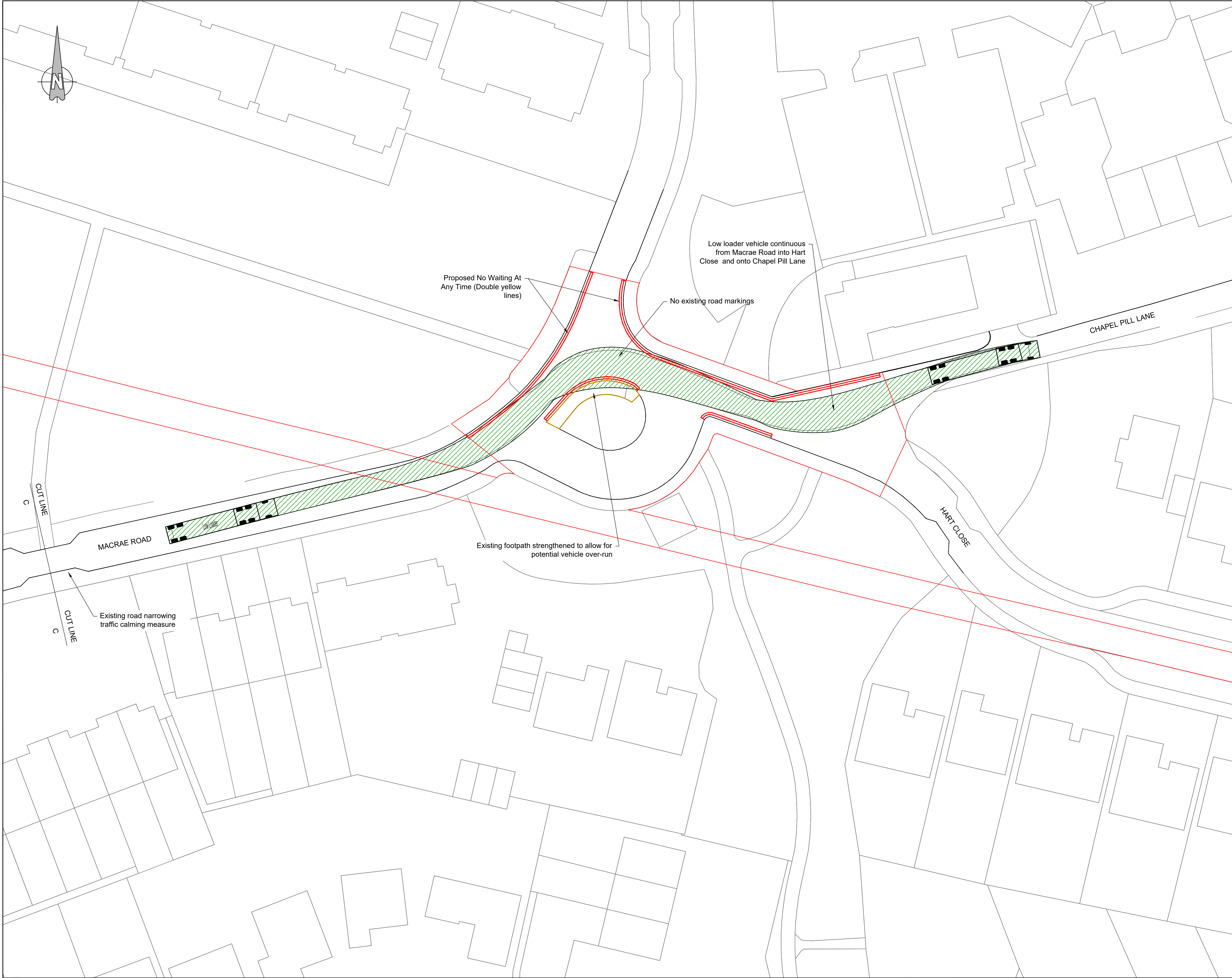
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 - Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-223 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 1 of 3' for Key Plan.

KEY:

— Order Limits



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Rev	By	Chkd	Apprvd	Date	Description
E	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/10/2019	Proposed TRVs added and minor amendments
D	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/07/2019	Drawing order revised & red line boundary added
C	DHP	KS	ADL	04/10/2017	Title amendments
B	DHP	ADS	ADL	15/09/2017	Minor amendments
A	ECF	AL	AL	21/01/2015	Red line boundary added Minor amendments



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Project: **PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE (METROWEST PHASE 1)**

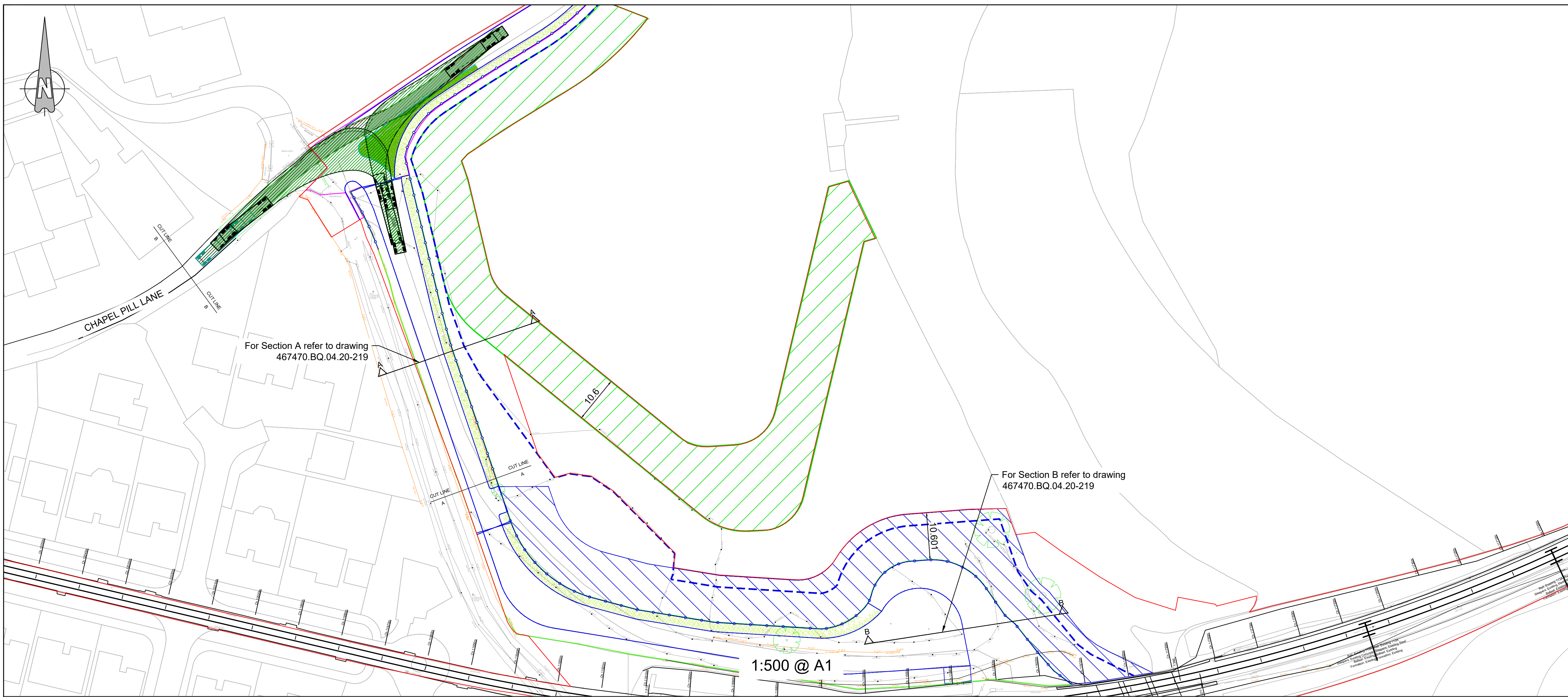
Drawing: **HAM GREEN HIGHWAY WORKS PLANS SHEET 3 OF 3**

Drawn by: ADS Date: 10/11/2015
 Checked by: AL Date: 12/11/2015
 Approved by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

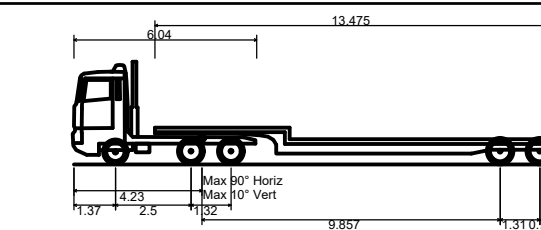
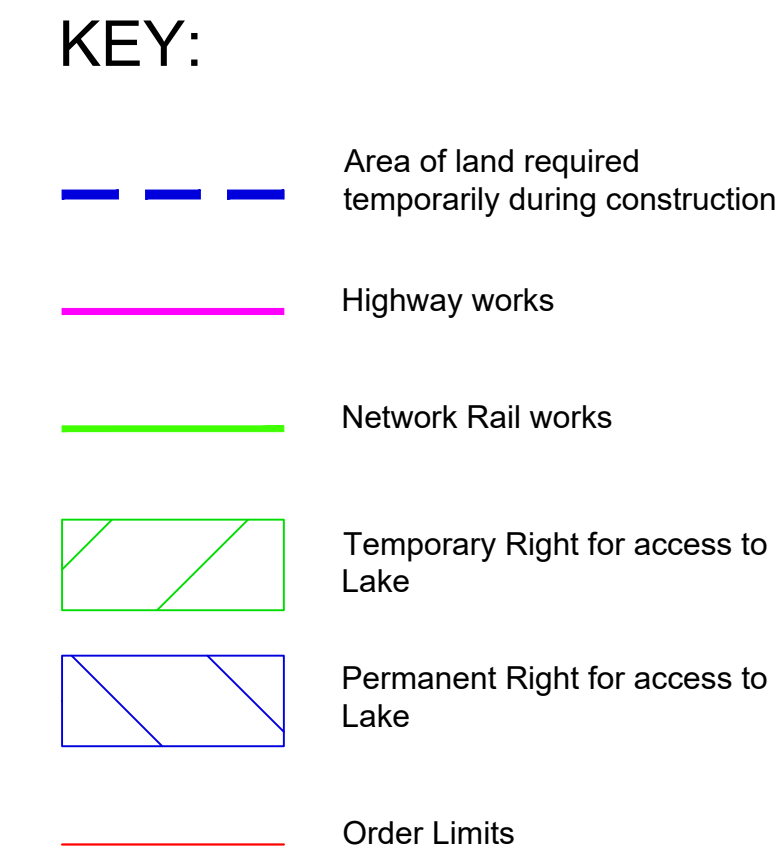
Drawing No. **467470.BQ.04.20-222** Revision **E**

Drawing Scale: 1:250 @A1

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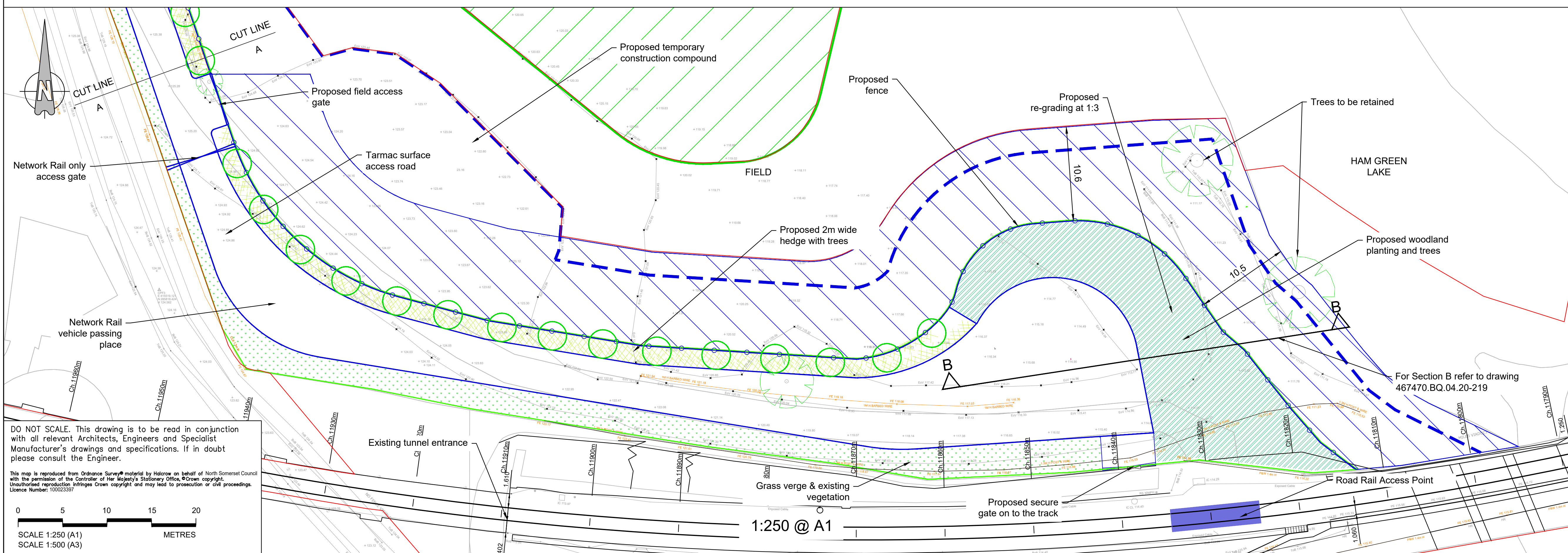


- NOTES:**
- All dimensions are in metres unless noted otherwise.
 - Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-223 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 1 of 3' for Key Plan.



Low Loader
 Overall Length 16.154m
 Overall Width 2.500m
 Overall Body Height 3.393m
 Min Body Ground Clearance 0.315m
 Max Track Width 2.500m
 Lock to lock time 6.00s
 Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 9.990m

Rev	By	Chkd	Apprv	Date	Description
U	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/10/2019	Minor amendments
T	DHP	ADL	ADL	19/10/2019	Amendments to match Adient land plans
S	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/07/2019	Updates to red line boundary and key
R	DHP	ADL	ADL	12/07/2019	Minor amendments & red line boundary added
Q	DHP	ADL	ADL	25/02/2019	Note amendments
P	DHP	ADS	ADL	28/11/2018	Minor amendments
O	DHP	ADL	ADL	29/09/2018	Minor amendments
N	DHP	AL	AL	30/05/2018	Temporary access amended
M	ADS	ADL	ADL	21/02/2018	NR Minor Cuts Updates & Site entrance altered to cater for Low Loader
L	DHP	AL	AL	18/11/2018	Alterations to temporary red line boundary and access track shown
K	DHP	KS	AL	04/10/2017	Title amendments
J	DHP	ADS	AL	18/09/2017	Principal Supply Point added
I	DHP	AL	AL	18/07/2017	Tunnel access re-design
H	ADS	AL	AL	24/05/2017	Network Rail Top survey data added
G	ECP	AL	AL	04/11/2016	Access gate relocated: Highways work and NR work boundary amended Proposed grass added
F	ECP	AL	AL	31/08/2016	Minor amendments
E	ECP	AL	AL	14/02/2016	Minor amendments Planting and trees added
D	ADS	AL	AL	25/02/2016	Compound Re-design to incorporate assumed ground profile On-hedge and trees included
C	ADS	AL	AL	24/02/2016	Contours Added
B	ECP	AL	AL	21/01/2015	Red line boundary added Highways and Network Rail works line added
A	ADS	AL	AL	11/12/2015	Network Rail Power Supply Building added on the north side of the track with access tracks amended to suit



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 SCALE 1:500 (A3)
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Project: **PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE (METROWEST PHASE 1)**

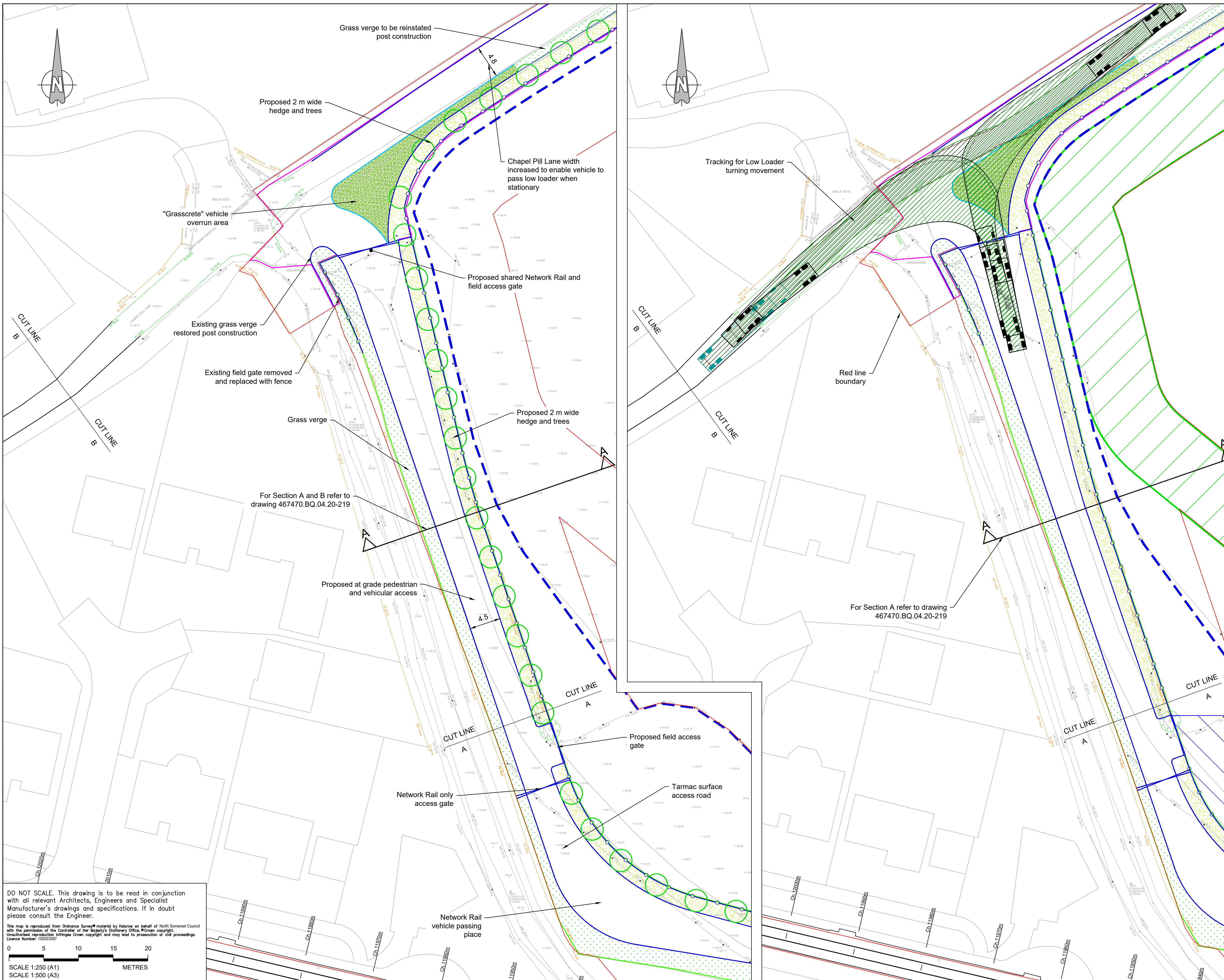
Drawing: **PILL TUNNEL EASTERN PORTAL COMPOUND LANDSCAPING & ACCESS PLAN SHEET 1 OF 2**

Drawn by: ADS Date: 10/11/2015
 Checked by: AL Date: 12/11/2015
 Approved by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

Drawing No: **467470.BQ.04.20-220** Revision: **U**

Drawing Scale: 1:250 @ A1 or 1:500 @ A3

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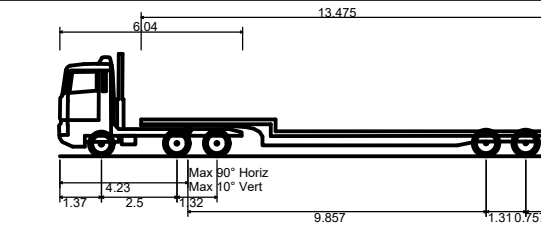


NOTES:

- All dimensions are in metres unless noted otherwise.
- Refer to drawing 467470.BQ.04.20-223 'Ham Green Highway Works Plans Sheet 1 of 3' for Key Plan.

KEY:

- Area of land required temporarily during construction
- Highway works
- Network Rail works
- Temporary Right for access to Lake
- Permanent Right for access to Lake
- Order Limits



Low Loader
 Overall Length 16.154m
 Overall Width 2.520m
 Overall Body Height 3.393m
 Min Body Ground Clearance 0.315m
 Max Track Width 2.500m
 Lock to lock distance 6.000m
 Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 6.990m

Rev	By	Chkd	Apprvd	Date	Description
U	DHP	ADL	ADL	31/10/2019	Minor amendments
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P	DHP	ADS	ADL	28/11/2018	Minor amendments
O	DHP	ADL	ADL	29/09/2018	Minor amendments
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E	ECF	AL	AL	14/02/2016	Highway works line amended; Minor amendments
D	ADS	AL	AL	25/02/2016	Compound Re-design to incorporate assumed ground profile; Ch-hedge and trees included
C	ADS	AL	AL	24/02/2016	Contours Added
B	ECF	AL	AL	21/01/2015	Red line boundary added; Highways and Network Rail works line added
A	ADS	AL	AL	11/12/2015	Network Rail Power Supply Building added on the north side of the track with access tracks amended to suit



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Project: **PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE (METROWEST PHASE 1)**

Drawing: **PILL TUNNEL EASTERN PORTAL COMPOUND LANDSCAPING & ACCESS PLAN SHEET 2 OF 2**

Drawn by: ADS Date: 10/11/2015

Checked by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

Approved by: AL Date: 12/11/2015

Drawing No. 467470.BQ.04.20-221 Revision U

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0 5 10 15 20 METRES
 SCALE 1:250 (A1)
 SCALE 1:500 (A3)

Drawing file path & name: \\Projects\467470\NSC Framework\2018\BQ.04.20\MMW Phase 1 Highway Engineering\BQ.04.20-221 Rev U.dwg

Proposed new homes at Chapel Pill Lane: Affordable Homes for Local People

Pill and District Community Land Trust (P&DCLT), in partnership with Alliance Homes, is working together to create 15 affordable rented homes for local people. The CLT is a not-for-private profit organisation set up by local volunteers for the benefit of the parishes of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and Abbots Leigh. Before we submit a planning application, we would like your views on the proposals.

The following sheets give some background to the site and how it might look once developed.

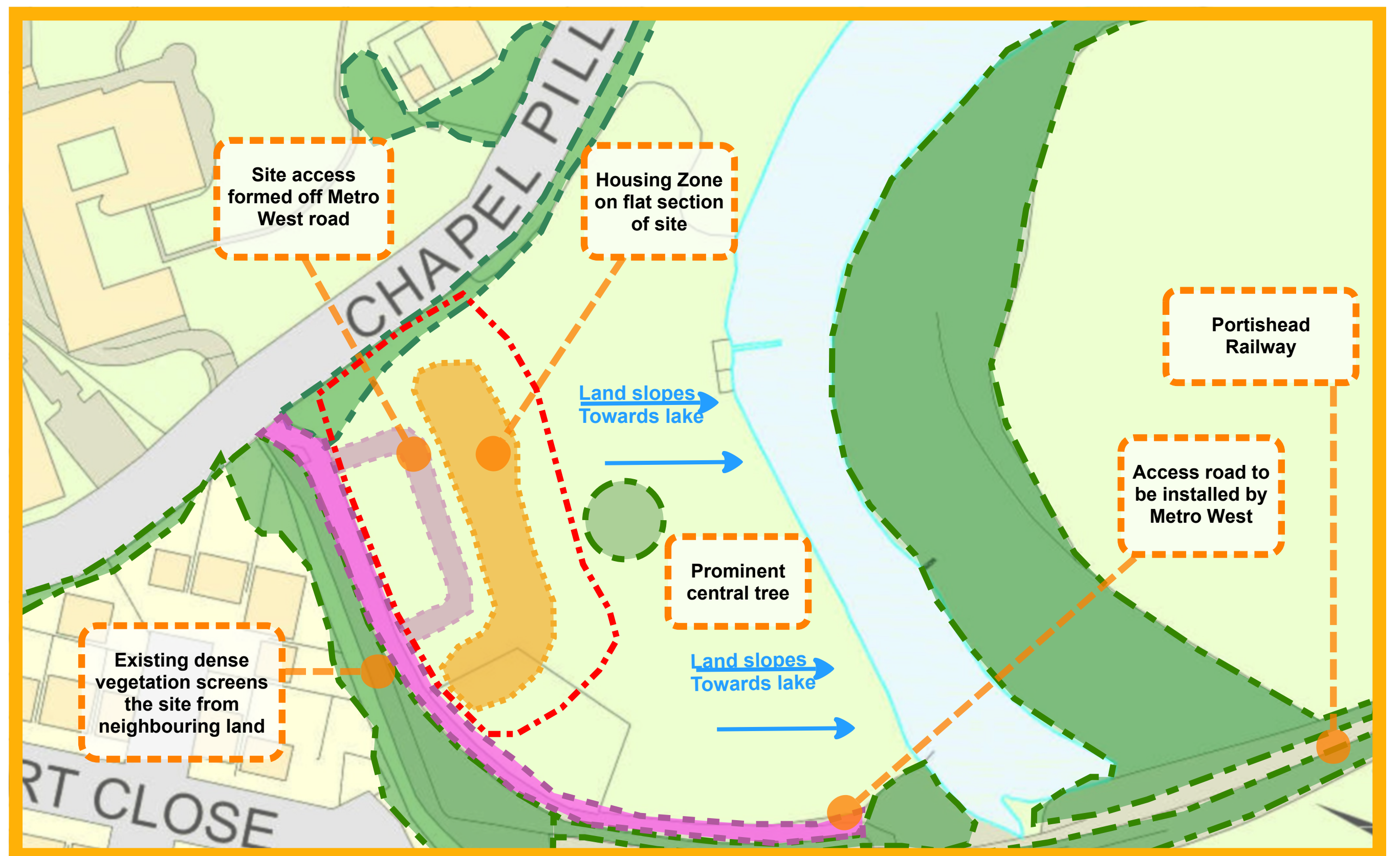
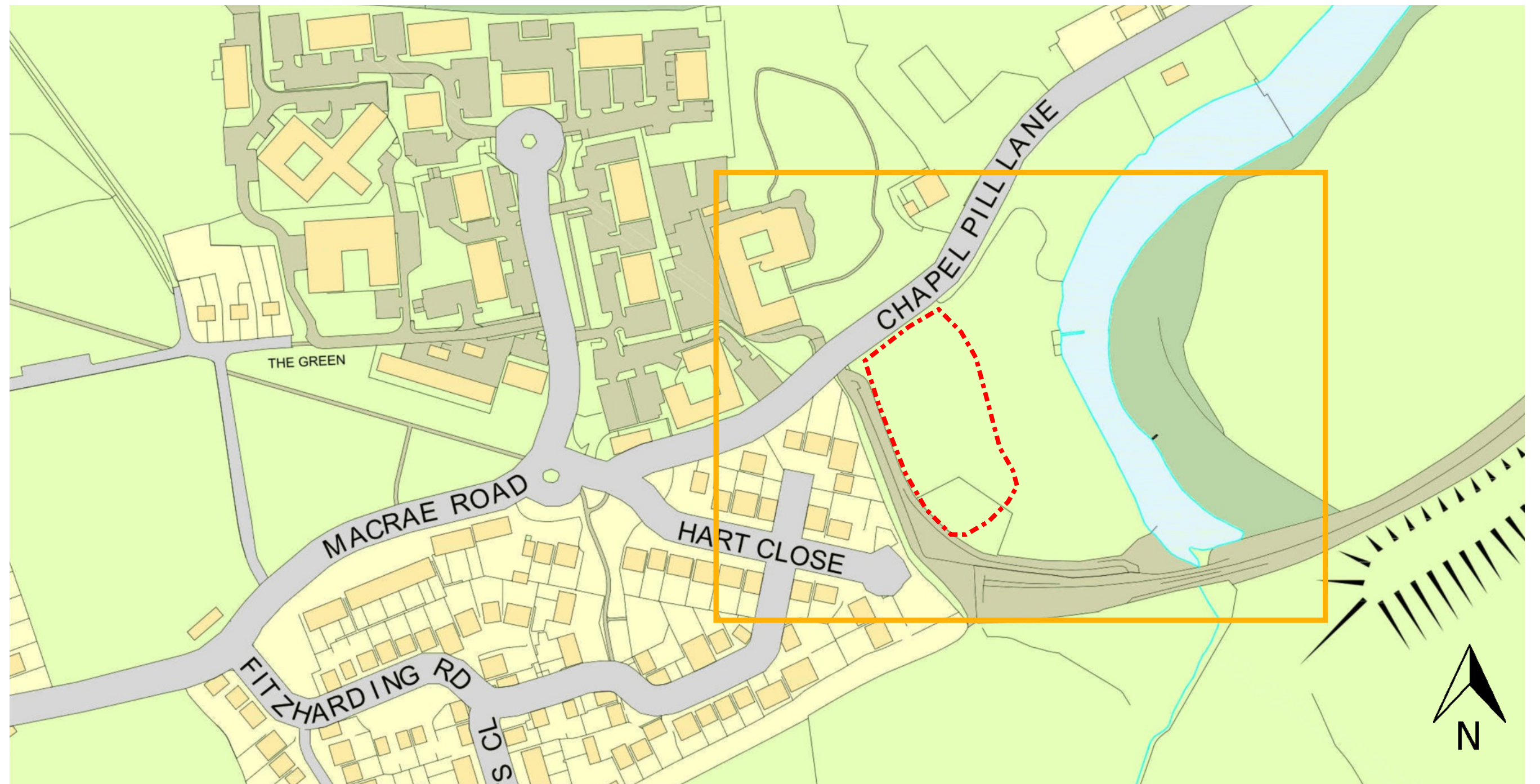
Background

In 2017, North Somerset Council published a Housing Needs Survey covering households in Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and Abbots Leigh. This survey identified a need within the two parishes for between 29 & 42 affordable rented homes over the following 5 years and an additional 10 shared ownership properties.

Aside from the local affordable housing demand identified, the survey found that 71% of households which responded would support a small development of up to 18 affordable homes for local people.

Site search

A search for land suitable for 'affordable homes for local people' was conducted by P&DCLT. A range of potential development sites within or adjacent to Pill were identified and assessed. A number were discounted due to a range of constraints such as lack of access, flood risk or because they were already in use as amenity land. Following discussions with their owners, all but one of the remaining sites proved to be unavailable for development. The one site remaining was the land at Chapel Pill Lane.



The Site

The proposed development site is located adjacent to Chapel Pill Lane, to the east of Ham Green. It is a privately owned field sloping down to the privately owned Ham Green Fishing Lake. It has not been grazed for a number of years. There is currently a grassed track within the site that runs around the south and west edge of the field which is a right of access to the fishing lake and also provides informal access for Network Rail to the railway.

Metrowest have proposed to formalise this route as part of their works to open the Portishead line, with improvement works to form a junction with Chapel Pill Lane and create a formal vehicle access to serve the railway cutting below. This provides an opportunity for P&DCLT to

share this access to serve the new development.

The site slopes steadily down, west to east, from a relatively level plateau alongside Chapel Pill lane to the private Ham Green Fishing Lake. The rear of the houses would be at least 60 metres from the lake and 15 metres above it. An alternative private access to the fishing lake will be provided from Chapel Pill Lane.

The proposed development site has the benefit of access from Chapel Pill Lane but will use the falling ground to sit lower than the surrounding trees and adjacent buildings at Penny Bohn and Hart Close. The main slope of the field is maintained as open land and new tree planting and hedges will help the development blend into the surrounding rural character.

Proposed new homes at Chapel Pill Lane: Affordable Homes for Local People

What about the flood risk?

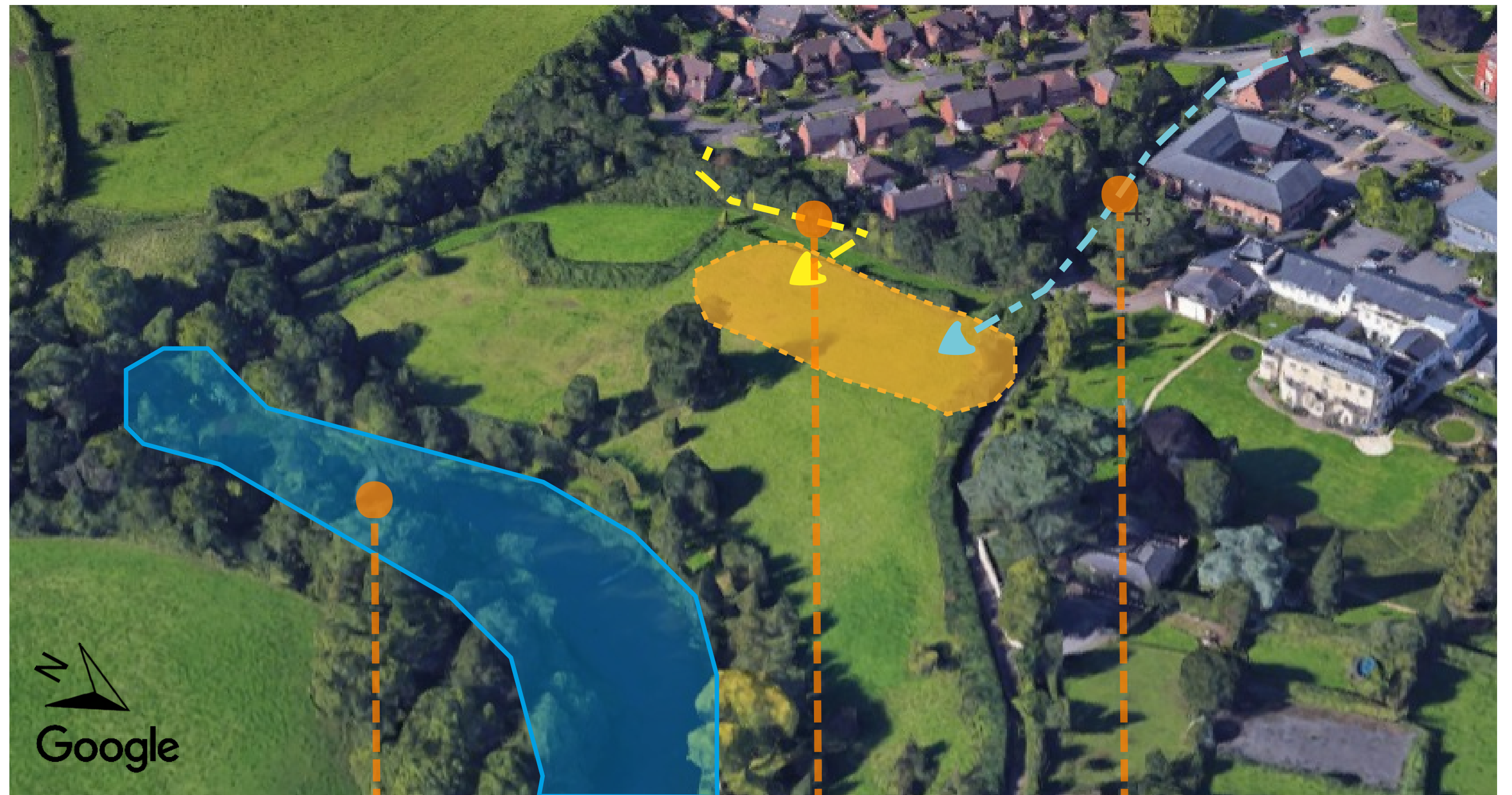
Government flood data places the proposed site outside any flood risk areas for both surface water and river/sea flooding.

Surface water runoff from the proposed development will be minimised through the use of permeable landscaping where possible, plus attenuation and discharging the run-off into the Ham Green lake to mimic the existing scenario. This has been agreed with the lake owner as it can also provide a benefit to the fish stocks.

The proposed development should not have any detrimental impact on the flood risk of existing properties as none lie between the site and the closest waterway.

What are the implications of the Bristol - Bath Green Belt?

Under exceptional circumstances, homes to meet a local need for affordable housing can be developed within the Green Belt. The judgement about what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances' is that of the Local Planning Authority – North Somerset Council. The Council is aware of the need for affordable housing in the parishes of Pill & Easton-in-Gordano and Abbots Leigh and, through our pre-application consultation and regular liaison – as well as through the Neighbourhood Planning process - has



Closest water course 15 metres below development level

Pedestrian Access via Hays Mays Lane

Vehicular Access via Chapel Pill Lane

been kept apprised of our emerging plans.

How will the site be accessed?

Vehicular access will be via Chapel Pill Lane. There will be a 'one way' loop within the site and a section of the accessway will be shared with the future MetroWest facility.

Chapel Pill Lane is relatively narrow and lacks a footpath. In order to provide a safer alternative to walking along the Lane, a pedestrian route will be formed along Hays Mays Lane which will connect into the existing footpath at the end of Hart Close.

What can be expected from the proposed housing?

The Housing Needs Survey found a demand for small, affordable, family

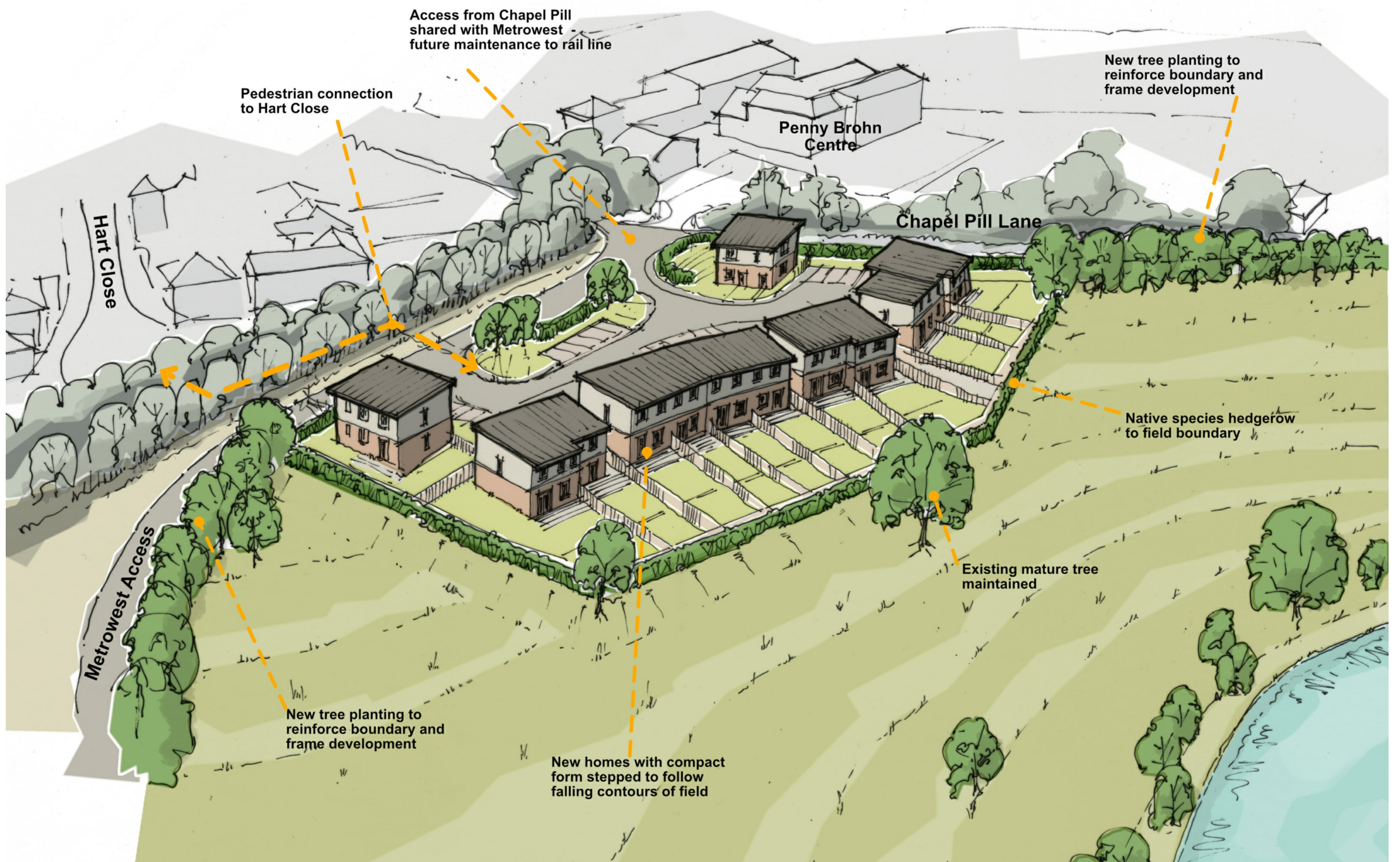
homes which would allow local people to remain in the district.

The houses will be prioritised for local people (through a Section 106 Planning Agreement and Local Lettings Policy) and will be at a subsidised, affordable rent. The Section 106 Agreement which accompanies a planning consent will require that the homes remain affordable and prioritised for local people in perpetuity. Because the homes will be owned freehold by P&DCLT they will be exempt from the government's new right for tenants to convert to shared ownership.

The development will provide a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom homes. Each property will be two storeys in height with a stepped section to reduce the development's visual impact.



Proposed new homes at Chapel Pill Lane: Affordable Homes for Local People



What measures are being taken to protect and enhance the setting?

P&DCLT is working with a local ecologist to enhance the local wildlife habitats with a series of proposals. This partnership will ensure that any negative impacts of development are carefully mitigated.

Additionally, the CLT is working with an archaeologist to understand the site and its former uses to avoid any impact on archaeology and heritage.

HOW TO COMMENT:

We welcome your feedback on these proposals. This can be done by visiting the project web site at www.alliancehomes.org.uk/ChapelPill by email to pillanddistrictclt@gmail.com or in writing to **Pill Resource Centre, 4 Baltic Place, Pill BS20 0EJ.**

Thank you.

