

# West of England Joint Spatial Plan

To respond to the housing requirement for the  
wider Bristol Housing Market Area

## Issues and options for consultation

November 2015



Bath & North East  
Somerset Council





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# Foreword

As the Leaders of the four Unitary Authorities which make up the West of England we are pleased to present this Issues and Options document for public consultation.

This is the first stage in preparing our new Joint Spatial Plan (JSP). This document is designed to stimulate debate at this early stage and we can confirm no decisions have yet been made on the future locations for growth and development.

The plan reflects the strong partnership working we have in the West of England to deliver sustainable economic growth and achieve a high quality of life for our communities.

In 2014 the four councils agreed a formal Memorandum of Understanding, pledging to work together to understand and plan strategically for the future development needs of the sub-region. This represented a clear commitment to engage in a statutory plan-making process, now taking shape in the form of the Joint Spatial Plan. At the JSP launch in June 2015 we set out the following commitment, which we reiterate as we enter the Issues and Options consultation phase:

**“To ensure that we effectively shape the future of the area and balance competing demands, we will:**

- i. Commit to a plan-led approach to guide future development and secure funding for essential infrastructure.
- ii. Ensure that strategic planning decisions are made locally in a fair and open way
- iii. Balance the need for growth and development with the need to secure enhanced quality of life and a strong environmental future.
- iv. Adopt a sequential approach to the identification of locations of growth that makes the best use of our existing brownfield sites and seeks to unlock more previously developed land before greenfield land is brought into consideration.
- v. Ensure emerging transport plans for the West of England are integrated and coordinated with the Joint Spatial Plan.”

By preparing the JSP we are formally agreeing to take the necessary steps to ensure that the West of England’s housing and employment needs are met in a strategic, considered and inclusive manner. The plan will provide the statutory basis by which local plans within the four authorities will be produced.

We are one of the most successful sub-regional economies in the United Kingdom. If we wish to continue to have a competitive, collaborative and growing economy with sustainable prosperity and a good quality of life for ourselves and future generations then we must also recognise that difficult decisions need to be made in planning for growth.

There is a need to provide more homes. These homes need to be of the right type and mix, in the right locations, and at prices that people can afford. They also need to meet the needs both of local people and local businesses. They need to be supported by the correct infrastructure and be provided in a way which delivers quality living environments.

In doing this we want to create a fairer region for everybody. We want people to have better access to employment, more choice of homes to live in at a range of prices, better infrastructure serving them and a more efficient, less congested transport system that allows residents, businesses and visitors to get around our area with ease. This is achievable, but only through proper strategic planning and cooperation between the four authorities.

The planning process is extremely sensitive and an ambitious growth and investment strategy must be balanced against protecting our environment and retaining our quality of life, which is both an envy of other regions and extremely important to the stimulation of economic growth. In particular, it is essential that we avoid the mistakes of the past such as the top-down Regional Spatial Strategy process which failed to connect with local communities and their aspirations. We need an approach built from the ground up which incorporates the needs of local people and what they want their communities to look like.

## Leaders' Statements

The Green Belt in particular has been an extremely effective policy tool for over 50 years. This remains a national policy priority and is highly valued by many communities. There are high quality environments such as the Bath World Heritage Site and the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as well as local assets to be safeguarded for future generations. An emphasis on maximising the use of previously developed land is an important principle contained within the consultation document, but this must not be translated as 'town cramming.' Nor must it prevent a full and proper debate about how Bristol, Weston and our other towns and villages should grow and expand to create more innovative, resilient, liveable, harmonious and connected places.

The Issues and Options stage is therefore focused on engaging with communities and stakeholders about the future of the sub-region and how we meet identified needs and realise our objectives.

We will be working together to fully understand the results of this consultation exercise before preparing a Draft Plan for consultation in Summer 2016.

**Cllr Tim Warren, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council:**

"We are committed to the guiding principles that will underpin the preparation of the JSP and recognises that it provides the opportunity for locational options and spatial scenarios to take account of national guidance, in particular in relation to Green Belt policy. This is particularly relevant to the district since the Bath and North East Somerset Green Belt Review 2013, notes that a fundamental aim of Green Belt policy '...is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open' (NPPF, paragraph 79) and an overall conclusion of the review is that all parts of the current Bristol and Bath Green Belt designation contribute to this aim."

**George Ferguson, Mayor of Bristol:**

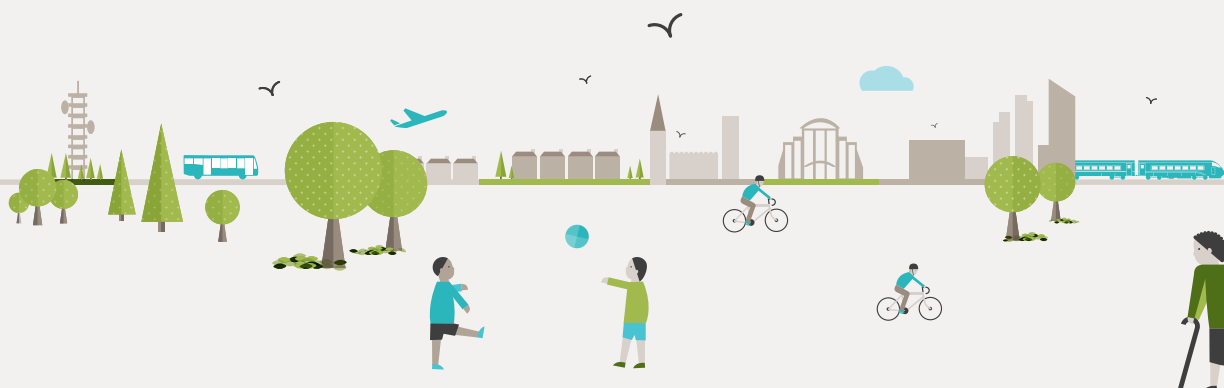
"My ultimate goal is to make Bristol one of the world's most liveable cities. It is therefore encouraging that we are working as a city region, planning across local authority boundaries, to deliver the affordable housing we need, land for business growth and the necessary transport and community infrastructure to create sustainable communities. We need to do this whilst protecting our natural environment both within the city and in the surrounding areas.

**Cllr Nigel Ashton, Leader of North Somerset Council:**

"The residents of North Somerset highly value the role of the Green Belt in maintaining the separation of settlements and in defining the character of local communities. We therefore continue to support the importance of protecting Green Belt as an effective long term approach to managing development, while supporting the need for accelerated housing delivery in sustainable locations"

**Cllr Matthew Riddle, Leader of South Gloucestershire Council:**

"We want to build a better future for our children, to ensure they have the same or better access to homes and jobs we have now. At the same time we want to protect our environment, especially the Green Belt. Together, we can do both: we should not shy away from this, but take the initiative and tackle these issues now so that people in every part of the region and future generations can enjoy a sustainable future. The JSP sets out an ambitious twenty year vision for getting the housing with planning consent built at a pace that meets the local need and is affordable, whilst maintaining and building somewhere communities are proud to call their home."



# Chapter 1 Introduction

## Help shape the future of our area

- 1.1 The West of England (WoE) currently faces a key challenge; how to develop and deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure to create viable and attractive places, while protecting the environment and quality of life. The local authorities of Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council have joined forces to prepare a new Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) to tackle this challenge.
- 1.2 Our ambition is that through better cooperation and collaboration we can deliver sustainable economic growth and enterprise, supported by public and private investment, and achieve a better quality of life for all our citizens. To meet this ambition there needs to be an effective land and housing market that keeps up with growing housing demand and provides affordable homes. Through this we can support a dynamic, productive economy that recognises the character and identity of individual communities, delivering more innovative, resilient, liveable, and connected places.
- 1.3 Looking ahead to 2036 and covering the combined administrative areas of the four Unitary Authorities (UAs) the plan's overall purpose is to identify:
  - the housing land requirements for the Wider Bristol Housing Market Area (HMA) (Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire) that will need to be met across the WoE;
  - the employment land required within the WoE Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA);
  - the most appropriate locations for the housing and employment growth needed; and
  - what transport improvements and other infrastructure investment will need to be made in the plan area to support sustainable growth.

- 1.4 We want the preparation of the JSP to be an open process. At the heart of this is building a common understanding of the pressing need for new housing and the benefits that new development will provide including transport improvements, and the opportunity to address inequality of access to homes and jobs. The challenges involved and the Vision we have for the WoE are set out in more detail in Chapter 2. To achieve our Vision the choices made will need to demonstrate that they address the critical issues identified.

## Why is it important to work together on Planning and Transport issues?

- 1.5 We understand that many people feel passionately about where they live and the impact new growth might have on their local communities. However, the UK has not built enough homes to keep up with growing demand. The scale of the issues to be addressed will require a strategic approach. In the WoE, we need to take steps to ensure more homes are built of the right type and mix, and in locations that people and businesses need. Many young people and families cannot afford their own homes while other people are living in homes that are too large for them with no realistic alternatives. It is important that the housing market enables a flexible labour market to support a productive economy. Businesses should be able to locate where they can be most efficient and create jobs, and enabling people to live and own homes close to where they work.
- 1.6 In order to achieve a competitive, collaborative and growing economy with sustainable prosperity and a good quality of life it is important to invest in housing, transport, health care, education and community facilities, public open spaces, and ensure sufficient land is available to support business. Going forward this planning requires cross-boundary working and co-operation. It's also important that planning for delivery of future homes and jobs is undertaken alongside strategic transport planning. Therefore to support the JSP the UAs

have also commenced a new Joint Transport Study (JTS). This will ensure future growth decisions are made with an understanding of the necessary transport investment needed to achieve sustainable communities. You can find out more about the JTS and the guiding principles that support it on our website.

- 1.7 By taking this action now the four WoE UAs are using their strategic planning and transport powers to put in place the local plan framework for the homes and jobs that people need. To ensure this takes place in a sustainable way, the four UA's have committed to the following guiding principles that will underpin the preparation of the JSP and the JTS. These are:
- i. Commitment to a plan-led approach to guide future development and secure funding for essential infrastructure consistent with the Government's core planning principles.
  - ii. That strategic planning decisions are considered jointly as part of the Duty to Cooperate and made locally in a fair and open way.
  - iii. To balance the need for growth and development with the need to secure enhanced quality of life and a sustainable environmental future.
  - iv. To adopt a sequential approach to the identification of locations of growth that makes the best use of our existing brownfield sites and seeks to unlock more previously developed land before greenfield land is brought into consideration.
  - v. To ensure emerging transport plans for the WoE are integrated with the JSP.

### **What is the Joint Spatial Plan and what area does it cover?**

- 1.8 The main purpose of the JSP and supporting evidence base is to identify the housing land requirements for the Wider Bristol HMA and employment land requirements for the FEMA i.e. the actual number of new homes and amount of employment land that will need to be provided. The JSP will set out the spatial distribution strategy, that identifies the best locations for where this new growth should be, across the West of England, to meet the needs of the Wider Bristol HMA. The HMA is the geographical area covered by the three Unitary Authorities of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. This does not include Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES), as Bath has its own HMA. However, as B&NES has a strong relationship to the south east of the Wider Bristol HMA, under the duty to co-operate the four UAs have agreed to work together as there may be a need to accommodate some of the growth of the wider Bristol HMA in B&NES. Spatial options in all four UAs will be equal contenders at the outset of the plan preparation. The JSP therefore covers all four UAs as shown in Figure 1.

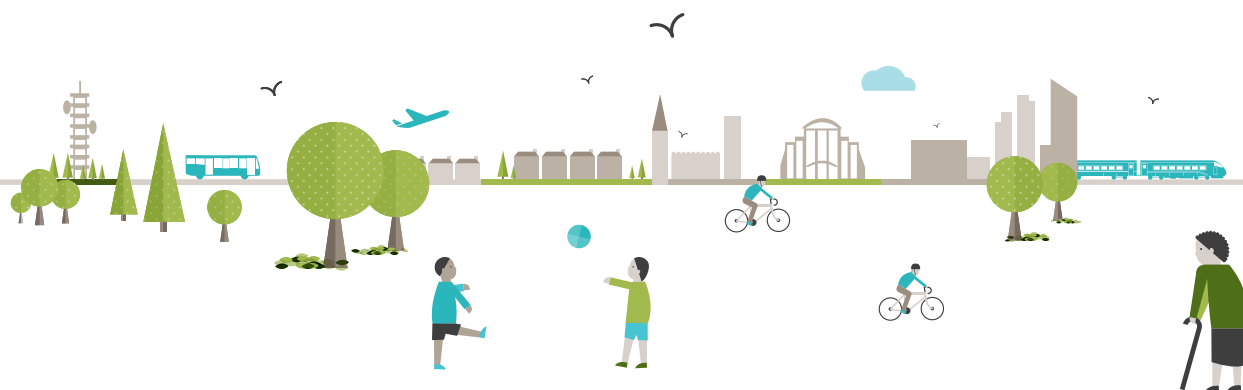
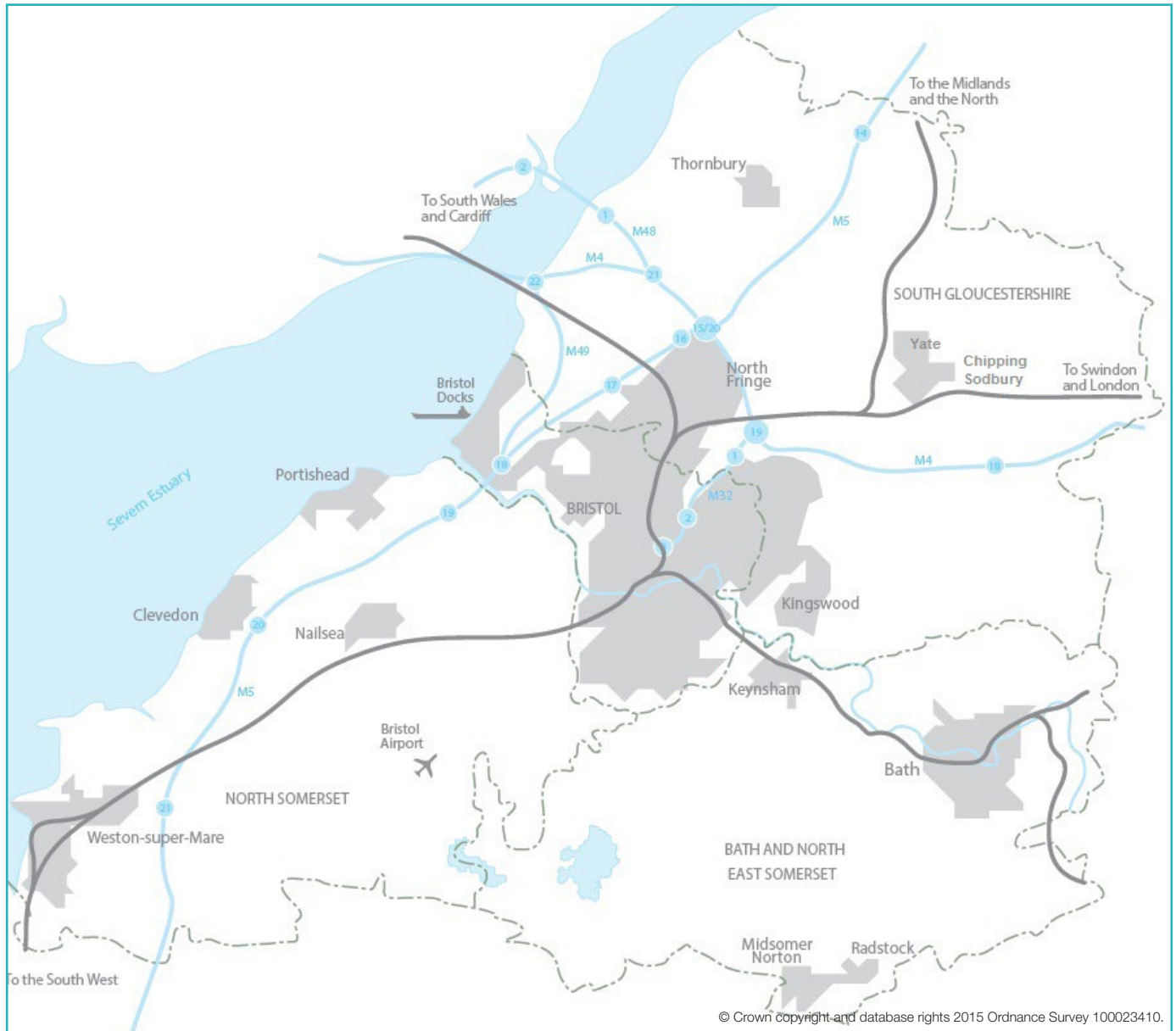




Figure 1: The West of England



1.9 Before any final decisions are made a number of key or 'statutory' stages involving extensive public consultation need to be completed. This 'journey' is defined by the procedures set out in the Government's planning regulations for how local plans should be prepared. It is also supported by carrying out a sustainability appraisal at each key stage. These statutory stages and the timetable for when they will be completed are presented in Figure 2.

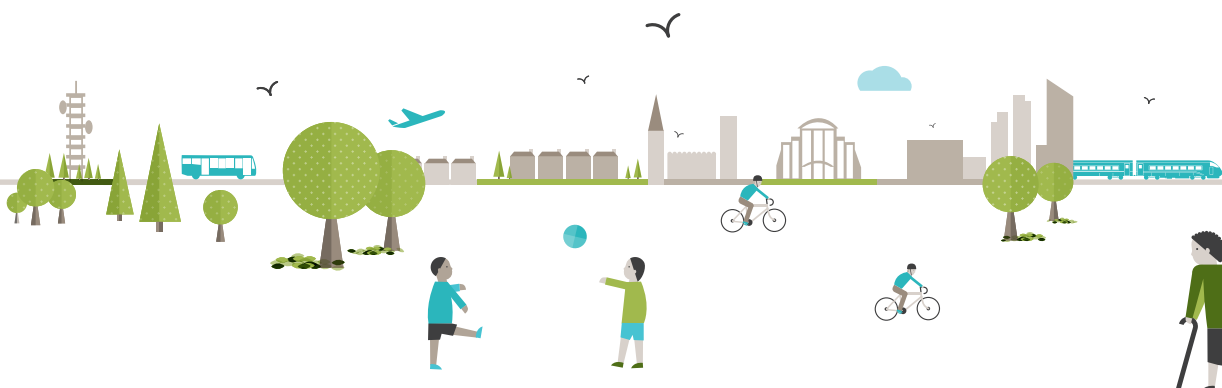


Figure 2: Stages and timetable for JSP preparation



### How does the JSP relate to existing Local Plans?

- 1.10 As a formal statutory Local Plan for the period 2016 to 2036 the JSP will, in due course, carry significant weight and be used to inform key planning decisions.
- 1.11 The JSP won't replace each authority's own local plans. However, it will provide the overall spatial strategy and level of housing and employment land to be provided in the period 2016 to 2036 to meet the needs of the Wider Bristol HMA and WoE FEMA. This will provide the higher level strategic planning policy framework for each UAs own local plan reviews. The JSP will also identify the strategic infrastructure, including transport, required to deliver the development needs identified. There will be a Key Diagram illustrating the JSP's policies, which will include the locations for strategic growth and the general extent of the Green Belt. Site specific allocations and policy designations will be determined through each UAs local plan which will need to be in conformity with the JSP.



## **What is the Issues and Options stage and how to use this document?**

- 1.12 No decisions have been made yet. This first stage is about hearing your views. To help with this we have put some initial thoughts and ideas together that we would like to seek people's views on each chapter explains more about the issues. There are questions within each chapter. Responses will let us know your views about:
- How should the West of England area change over the next 20 years?
  - How should growth be planned, enabled and managed?
  - Where should new homes, jobs and transport improvements be located?
  - Where is it most important to minimise the impact of change?
- 1.13 Statutory plan making can be a complex and detailed process and it can be challenging to ensure everyone engages in the process particularly when it is at a strategic level and not dealing with specific local issues. However, the JSP needs to be owned by all interested parties and our communities and they need to see their objectives reflected in the programme. To support this, effective public engagement and awareness raising is crucial. Details of the engagement programme that supports the JSP/ JTS is available from our website.
- 1.14 In January 2015 we published a Pre-Commencement Document (PCD). This set out how the four councils intended to undertake the JSP. This was subject to public consultation between January and March 2015. Over 80 people and organisations replied. The comments received and our responses have been published on our website, which have helped the four councils prepare for this next stage.

## **What happens now?**

- 1.15 This is the start of helping people to be informed and to be able to actively participate in helping the four UA's plan for the future growth needs of the WoE. Undertaking this work does not in any way reduce the status of the existing Local Plan Core Strategies and development plan documents used by each local authority to make planning decisions.
- 1.16 Your views are important and we want to hear from you. Comments and opinions are now sought for 12 weeks from 9th November 2015 – 29th January 2016.
- 1.17 Once this stage is complete the four UA's will review the comments made and will use these to inform the preparation of a draft Joint Spatial Plan.
- 1.18 Details about how to make comments and become more involved in helping the local authorities of Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council shape the future of the WoE is set out in Chapter 6.

## Chapter 2 Vision, issues & objectives

### West of England: Key Facts & Figures

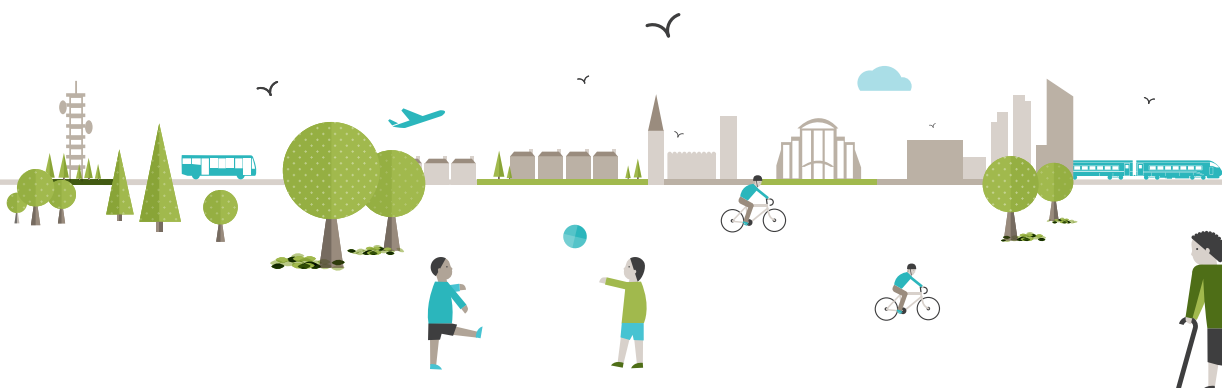
- 2.1 The West of England (WoE) covers the four Unitary Authorities (UAs) of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. The WoE is a generally prosperous area with an excellent quality of life and a growing national and international profile.
- The WoE covers an area of 1,343 km<sup>2</sup> with a growing population which currently stands at 1.1 million people, around 90% of which live in urban areas
  - Its economy is worth £26 bn a year and it contributes a net £0.6 bn to the UK Treasury,
  - 22% of employment is within the high tech economy above the average for England,
  - Good connectivity including accessibility to London, the Midlands and the south west, a major airport and port, rail and strategic road network, enabling access to global mass markets, although connectivity to the south is less well defined.
  - It has an outstanding physical environment with two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the only 'whole city' World Heritage Site, coast, areas of international ecological importance and a diverse countryside with attractive market towns and villages,
  - Between 2004/5 and 2013/14 26% of net new homes were affordable in the WoE compared to 30% for England,
  - The WoE has a number of areas which fall within the 10% most deprived nationally.

### Critical Issues

- 2.2 The Joint Spatial Plan has a clearly defined role which is to set out how the much needed new affordable homes and employment land will be accommodated alongside the infrastructure required to support this to enable sustainable growth. Based on the JSP, more detailed land use policies will be set out in the local plans for the four UAs.
- 2.3 Within this context, and conforming to the national 12 core planning principles, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, a clear understanding is needed of the critical issues that need to be addressed through the JSP. These critical issues inform the vision and the spatial objectives which will guide the JSP policy framework. The issues that the UAs have so far identified as critical to address in the JSP are summarised below.

### Housing & wellbeing

- 2.4 As identified in paragraph 1.5 there is a significant and increasing need for housing in the wider Bristol Housing Market Area (HMA) and particularly for affordable homes (this is quantified in Chapter 4). This is a result of people living longer, more births over deaths, smaller households and in-migration. The majority of the affordable housing requirement is not yet planned for and to achieve these high levels will require a step change in delivery. NPPG notes that affordable housing need is based on households "who lack their own housing or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market" and identifies a number of different types of household which may be included.

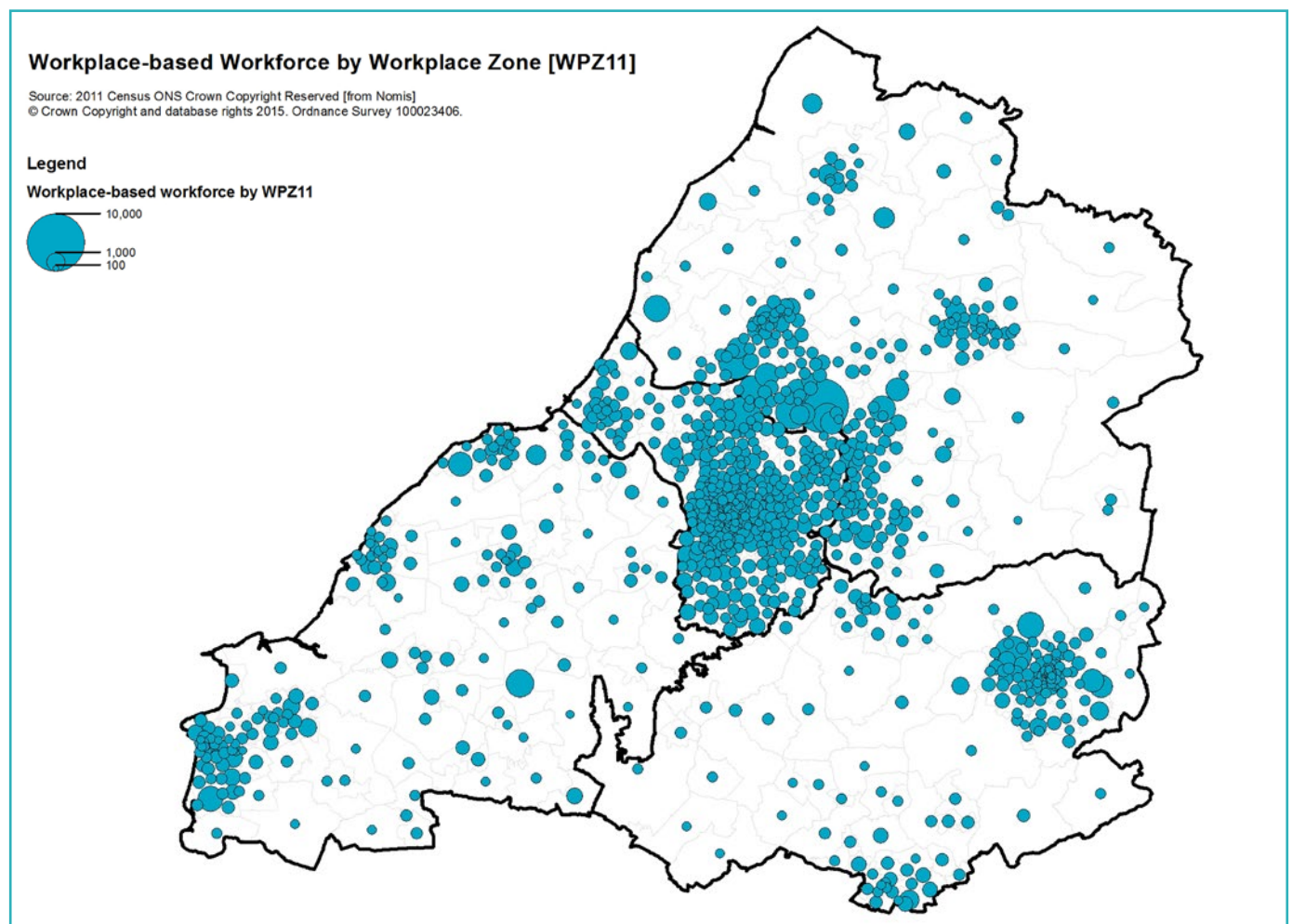


- 2.5 The quality of new housing development has, at times, been perceived to be of poor design and not an integral part of place making. The lack of up front supporting infrastructure has contributed to some poor connectivity and accessibility in these new developments.
- 2.6 Patterns of development in the past have often contributed to low levels of physical activity, leading to increasing obesity and an increased risk of physical and mental ill health issues, putting a strain on health services.

## Economy

- 2.7 The success of the economy of the WoE has made it a net contributor to the UK exchequer. The Local Enterprise Partnership for the WoE has ambitions for strong economic growth, greater productivity and increased generation of jobs. The existing key employment areas are likely to continue to be the most significant locations for boosting economic growth and for successful future job generation. New locations may also need to be considered to provide for a wider range of supporting service jobs that may not be high in productivity but provide much needed employment to all sectors of the workforce.

Figure 3: Major employers



2.8 Despite the prosperity of the sub-region, concentrations of deprivation exist in parts of the sub-region such as south Bristol, south western parts of Bath and pockets in the centre of Weston-Super Mare and in some rural areas. In addition, the provision of social and physical infrastructure has not kept pace with housing growth and is under strain in some areas.

## Environment

2.9 The outstanding environment of the sub-region makes a substantial contribution to quality of life and a key driver for why people want to live, work and visit the area. The high quality environment also makes a significant contribution to the economic success of the area.

2.10 Within the WoE, there is a rich landscape which includes two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, coastal areas, woodlands, grasslands and wetlands. The historic environment is exceptional, including, the City of Bath World Heritage Site, ancient monuments, numerous conservation areas and listed buildings. Ecologically, the sub-region is home to protected species, and includes areas with international and local ecological designations. Within the settlements, parks and gardens, allotments, cycle networks, rivers and canals, woodlands and trees all make up a green infrastructure network which serves people and wildlife, improving our everyday lives.

2.12 While in the past some patterns of development, design and layout are likely to have contributed to, rather than addressed the problems of climate change. Past development patterns have not always taken account of the need to minimise exposure to flood risk, an

issue which is exacerbated by climate change. Flood risk is a threat to realising the economic potential in the West of England particularly within the Enterprise Zone and in some parts of Bath City Riverside and Avonmouth/ Severnside Enterprise Area(s). Future development plans provide an opportunity to contribute to combatting climate change, and reducing flood risk by identifying investment from several partners, utilising sustainable design and materials.

2.13 The JSP at the strategic level will highlight the potential for making more intelligent use of the environment to secure better economic and social outcomes, rather than just considering the environment as a development constraint. Patterns of development which boost and improve environmental assets will have added benefits to society by integrating ecosystem services, offered by the environment. For example, the inclusion of trees and woodlands within development can absorb carbon dioxide and provide shade. Similarly, using green spaces for natural drainage and allowing water to be purified through natural ecosystems is a more intelligent design approach than increasing the likelihood of flood through hard surfaces.

2.14 The Bristol-Bath Green Belt has and should continue to have a significant role to play in maintaining the open countryside in a large part of the WoE and has been a major factor in shaping the location of new development. 48% of the sub-region currently falls within the Green Belt.

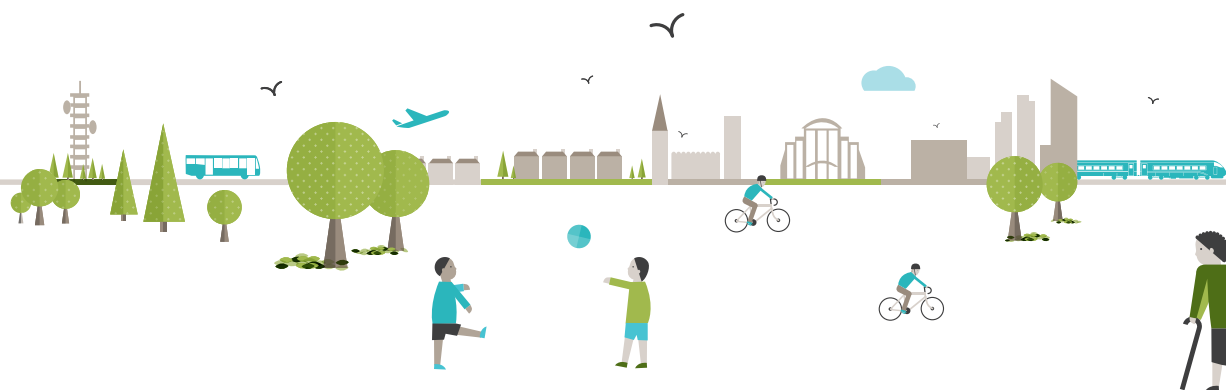




Figure 4: Environmental assets in the West of England

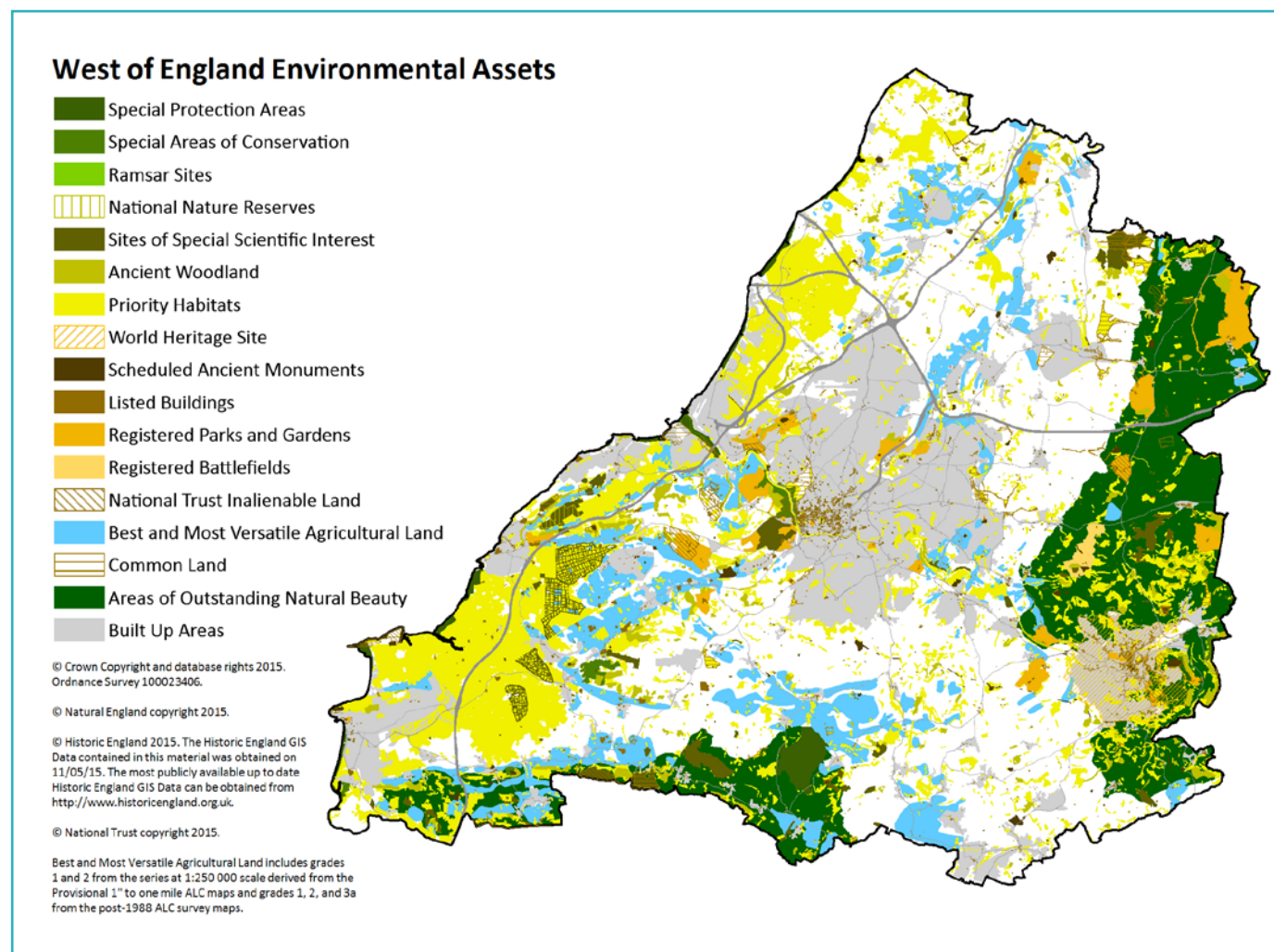
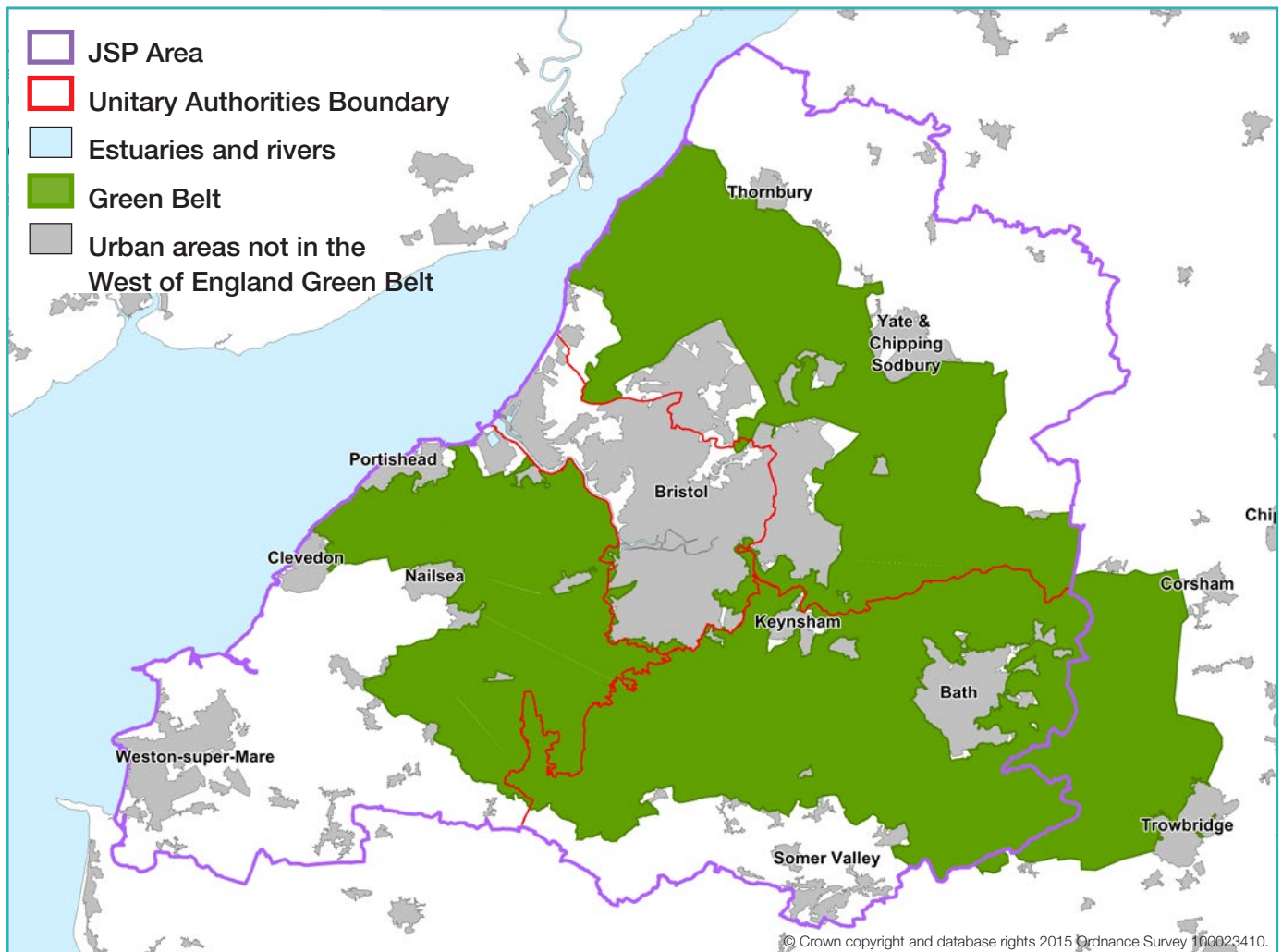




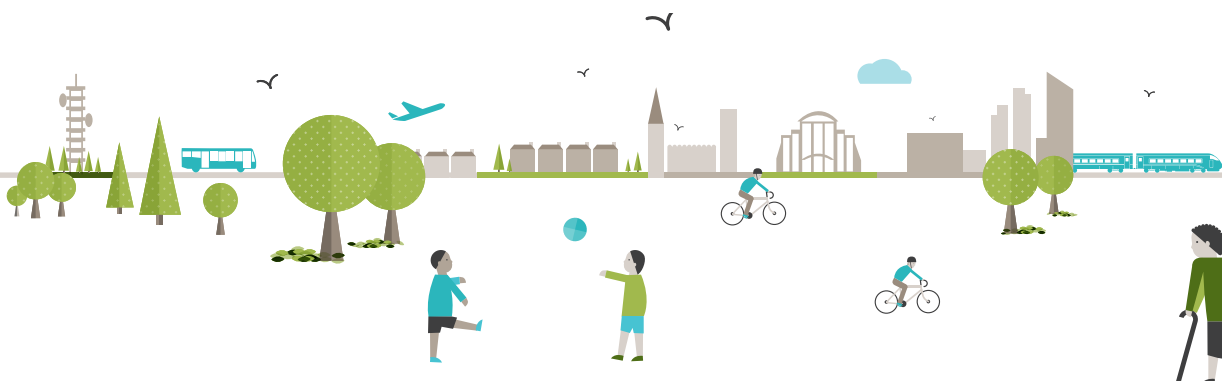
Figure 5: Bristol – Bath Green Belt



## Transport

2.16 The inner urban areas have more comprehensive and sustainable travel choices, including by walking, cycling and public transport. Choices are more limited outside the urban areas. These areas often exhibit high levels of car dependency and low levels of public transport use, although people living in the WoE walk and cycle more than in other UK regions.

2.17 There are high levels of traffic congestion, including in Bath, Central Bristol, South Bristol, the northern and eastern sides of Bristol and Weston-super-Mare. Air Quality Management Areas are identified in parts of the urban areas of Bristol, Bath, Keynsham and, Saltford as well as Warmley/Kingswood. There are problems with the ‘resilience’ of the road network (such as its ability to cope with the impact of unforeseen road closures) and there is limited capacity on the rail network.



2.18 There is an imbalance of jobs over resident workers in central Bristol and Bath and an imbalance of workers over jobs in Weston-Super-Mare, the towns and rural areas with resultant unsustainable commuting patterns.

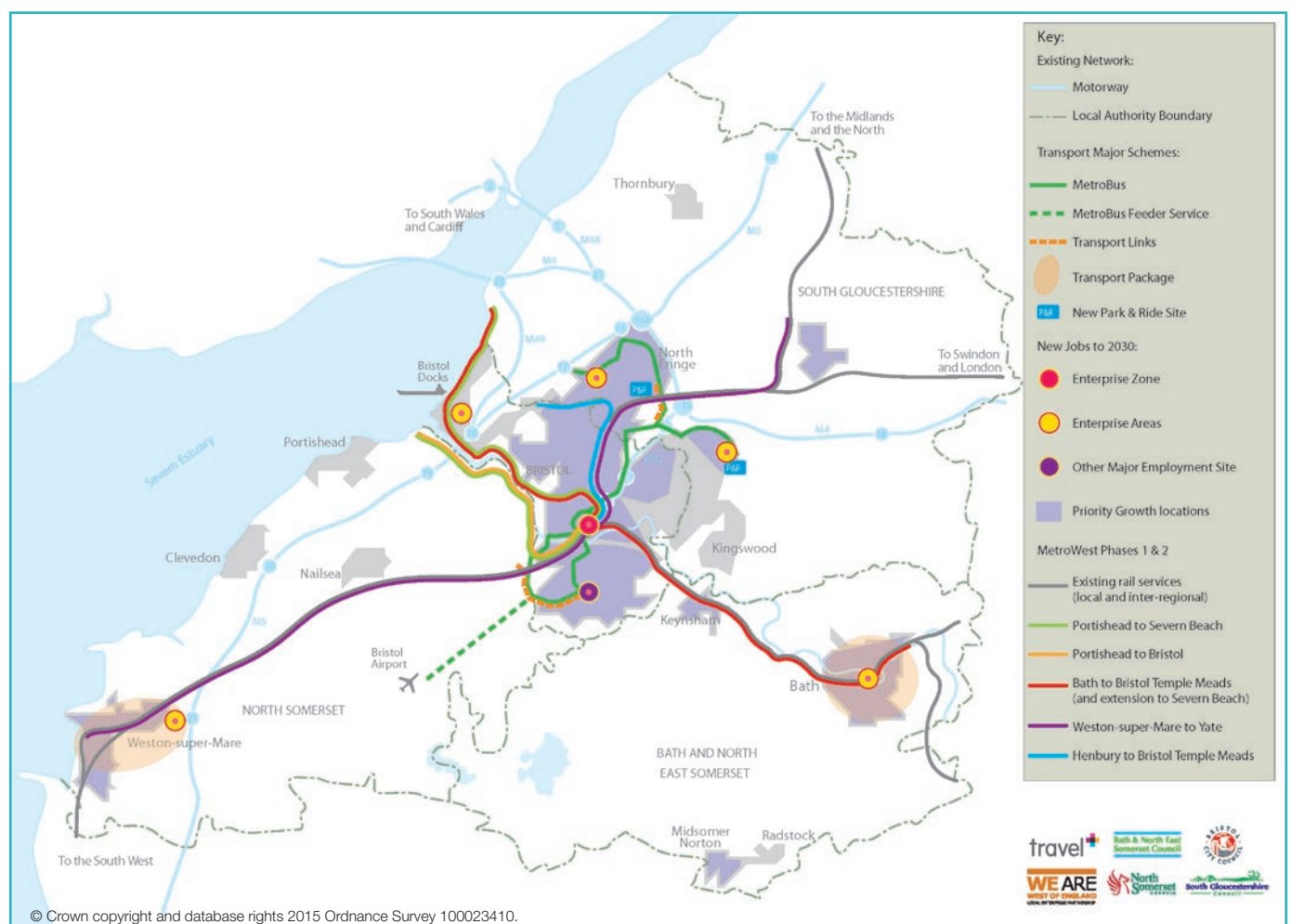
#### Other infrastructure constraints

2.19 Provision of infrastructure in the past has not always kept pace with growth and development. In delivering sustainable, successful and quality places, it is important to consider capacity issues in water and sewerage, electricity and energy supplies. The digital communication needs of our communities and business are also now crucial. Technological change may become increasingly important in supporting sustainable development choices.

### Consultation Question

1. Have the most appropriate critical spatial issues been identified in addressing housing and wellbeing; the economy; the environment; and transport?

Figure 6: Key Transport infrastructure in the West of England



## Vision for 2036

- 2.20 To achieve the delivery of homes and employment land needed for the future, we need a vision and spatial strategy that recognises the character and identity of individual communities and has the ability to make places more innovative, competitive, connected and sustainable through investment in strategic infrastructure. This requires the co-operation of public, private and voluntary sectors and community participation, to facilitate the selection of strategic priorities and projects.
- 2.21 The WoE Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out an economic vision for the sub-region to 2036. Drawing on this, and the critical issues (set out in paragraphs 2.2 – 2.19), the JSP needs a vision to set the direction for the spatial strategy. This economic vision has been augmented to reflect social and environmental aspirations and the proposed vision is set out below.
- 2.22 Similarly, a vision has been developed to guide the preparation of the Transport Study. This vision seeks an affordable, low carbon, accessible, integrated and reliable transport network to achieve a more competitive economy and better connected, more active and healthy communities.

### Proposed Vision for the West of England Joint Spatial Plan

By 2036 the WoE will be one of Europe's fastest growing and most prosperous sub regions with the gap between disadvantaged and other communities closed and a rising quality of life for all. The rich and diverse environmental character will be integral to health and economic prosperity. Patterns of development and transport will facilitate healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Existing and new communities will be well integrated, attractive and desirable places and supported by the necessary infrastructure. New development will be designed to be resilient to, and reduce the impacts of climate change.

### Consultation Question

**2. Is the above vision the most appropriate one for guiding development and growth in the West of England up to 2036?**

**Are there any changes you would like to see to the vision?**



## Spatial Objectives

2.23 In order to deliver the Vision and to address the critical issues, the development of the JSP will be guided by the following spatial objectives which reflect the defined scope of the JSP.

### Spatial Objectives

The spatial strategy should:

#### Housing & wellbeing

1. Meet the full need for market and affordable housing in a way which enables demonstration of a five year housing land supply within each Unitary Authority
2. Entail a pattern, location and nature of development which promote healthy lifestyles and creates a sense of community through quality design.

#### Economic growth

3. Facilitate economic growth of both existing employment centres such as the Enterprise Zone and Enterprise Areas and in new locations which will most successfully deliver the scale and type of job generation identified in the Strategic Economic Plan for the WoE.
4. Assist in closing the gap between disadvantaged and other communities

#### Transport & Infrastructure

5. Ensure that new development does not exacerbate existing pressures on infrastructure and that the necessary infrastructure is provided .
6. Focus new housing and employment which facilitate public transport and active travel methods and limit substantial new housing and employment in locations which would exacerbate unsustainable travel patterns.

### Environment

7. Maintain or enhance the environmental quality and the attractive character and identity of the WoE's cities, towns, villages, and countryside and embeds the services provided by the environment into our patterns for sustainable growth.
8. Respond to the challenges of climate change and minimise flood risk.
9. Have place making at its heart with high quality design that positively responds to local context and heritage assets.
10. Maximise the use of brownfield land & minimise the use of greenfield land.

### Consultation Question

**3. Are the above spatial objectives the most appropriate ones for guiding development and growth in the West of England up to 2036?**

**Are there any changes or are there other objectives you would like to see?**

## Chapter 3 How much development do we need to plan for?

3.1 Based on evidence of housing needs within the Wider Bristol Housing Market Area (HMA), the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) will identify the number of homes to be built over the lifetime of the Plan, 2016 – 2036. This is known as the housing requirement. The housing requirement to meet the needs of the Wider Bristol HMA, will be set out and published for each Unitary Authority (UA). The JSP will explain how these numbers fit together as an overall strategy for our area.

The JSP will also establish the requirement for employment land / floorspace for the West of England (WoE) for the period 2016 to 2036.

### The need for more homes

3.2 The JSP will establish the number of new homes which will be required in the area known as the Wider Bristol HMA<sup>1</sup>. The HMA is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key linkages between places where people live and work. The Wider Bristol HMA covers all of Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and it is acknowledged extends into part of Bath and North East Somerset, and mainly rural parts of Sedgemoor and Stroud districts.

3.3 The geographical extent of the Wider Bristol HMA has been defined in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) produced by specialist consultants ORS in July 2015. The SHMA has taken the HMA as the boundaries of three whole UAs. The data for projecting housing needs is only reliable at the UA level and all housing needs figures for the Wider Bristol HMA therefore refer to the three UA areas of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

<sup>1</sup> The JSP does not consider the housing needs arising within the Bath Housing Market Area. This is subject of a separate SHMA which is addressed in the adopted Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy. The housing requirement for the Bath Housing Market Area is programmed to be reviewed in 2019. The JSP will set out the requirement for the Wider Bristol HMA to be met within B&NES UA.





Figure 7: Actual Housing Market Areas

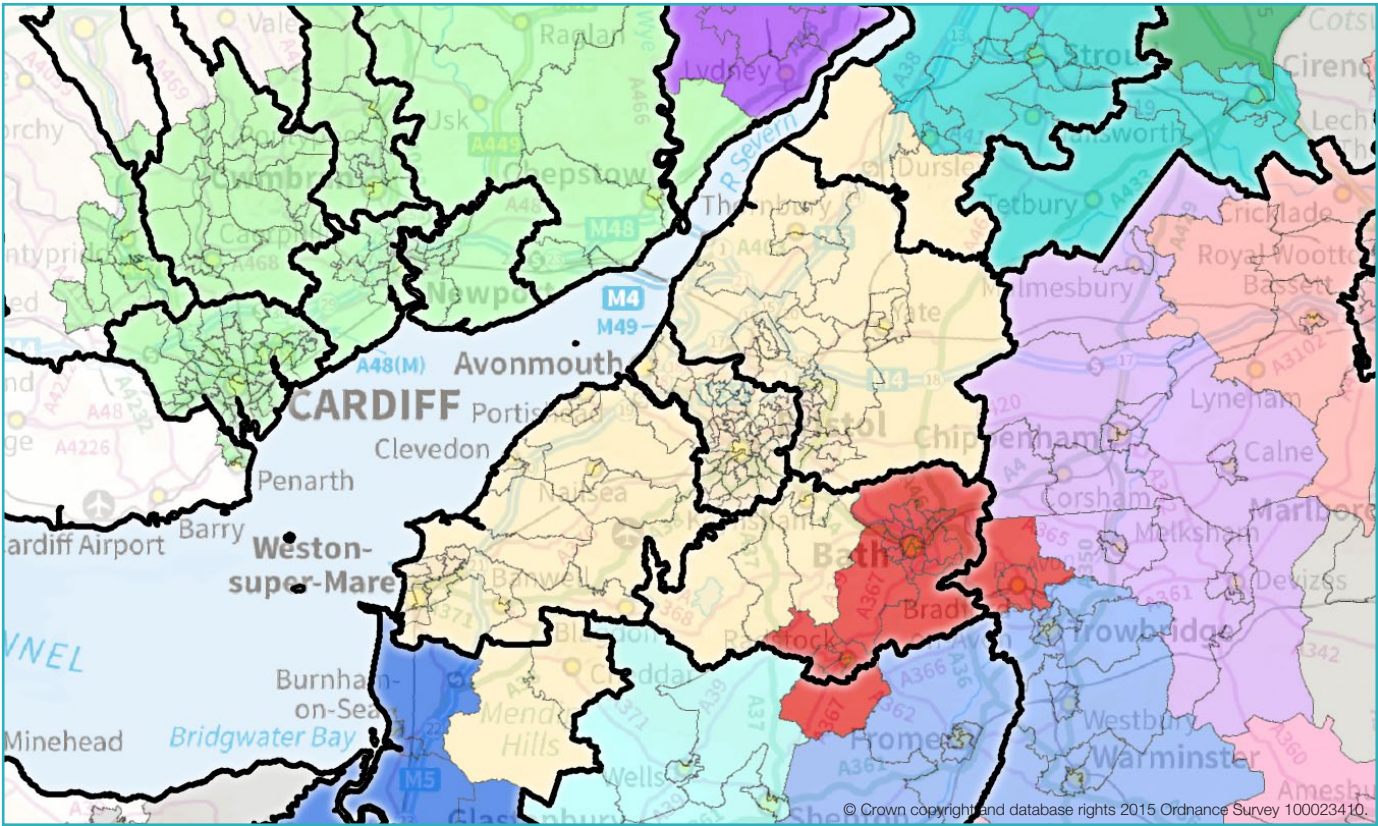
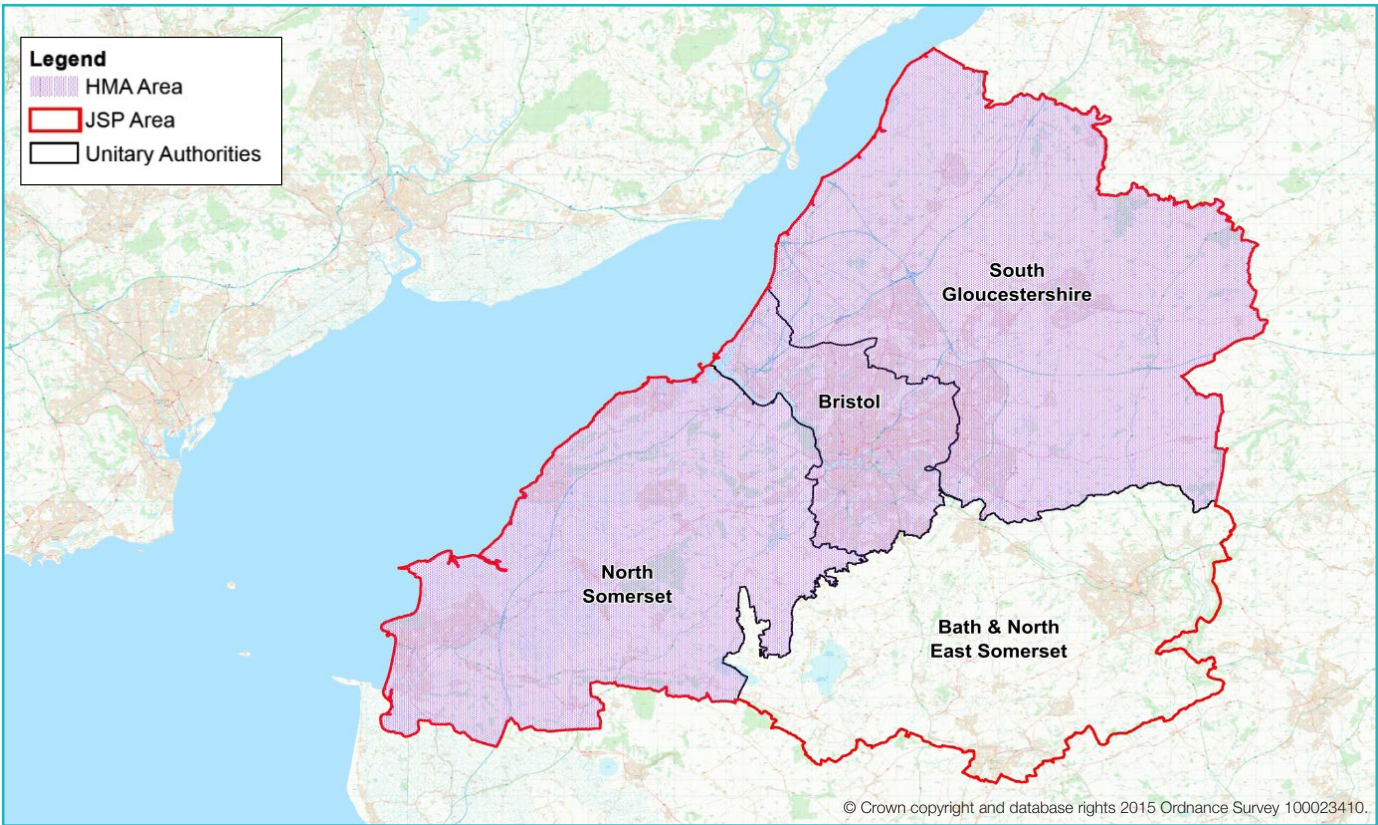


Figure 8: Wider Bristol Housing Market Area





3.4 The SHMA identifies the full Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for Housing in the Wider Bristol HMA to be **85,000 homes**<sup>2</sup>, for the period from 2016 to 2036 of which there is a need for 29,100 homes to be affordable to people on low incomes. About 8,400 of this affordable need relates to the existing affordable housing needs estimated at 2016 and about 20,600 relates to future projected needs over the plan period. The assessment took account of:

- National population projections and the government's household projections;
- Migration trends – 10 year trend between 2001 and 2011;
- Concealed families and homeless households;
- Employment trends – Local Economic Partnership Strategic Economic Plan target of 95,000 additional jobs between 2010 and 2030 for the WoE;
- Market signals- house prices, rents, affordability, overcrowding and rate of development; and
- Forecast backlog of provision before 2016<sup>3</sup>.

Whilst further forecasts may become available during the preparation of the JSP, the SHMA takes account of the best available information at the time of drafting.

3.5 The detailed consideration of these overall needs is set out in the SHMA Volume 1.

The role of the JSP will be to establish the Housing Requirement based on the OAN. This could be greater or less than the need currently identified depending on the evidence and options available. For instance, there may be pressures to boost the housing supply beyond the OAN in light of updated evidence on job growth ambitions, a greater growth in student numbers than in the past or to help increase affordable housing. Conversely, the amount of housing that can be delivered in the plan area might be constrained by the sustainability, infrastructure or environmental considerations. It may be necessary to ask adjoining local authorities to consider accommodating any identified unmet need, if it is not possible to meet these needs due to any adverse impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

### The supply of homes

3.6 In meeting the need for the 85,000 homes, the current local plans together with small windfall site developments are estimated to deliver some 56,000 new homes in the Wider Bristol HMA over the period 2016 to 2036. Therefore, to meet the need for additional new homes up to 2036 it is estimated that the JSP will need to plan for a further 29,000 homes to be delivered.

<sup>2</sup> This figure relates to the Wider Bristol HMA, comprising Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire local authority areas as recommended in the ORS SHMA Report.

<sup>3</sup> This is an estimate of the amount of provision required by 2016 which has not yet been delivered



Table 3.1 How many homes are needed?

| OAN 2016–2036  | Planned and forecast homes 2016-2036  | Additional homes needed to 2036  |
|--|---|--|
| The overall number needed by 2036  | Not built yet but planned for. It includes homes which have been allocated; developments with planning permissions and forecasts of delivery from small sites | This is the number of homes which are needed but have not yet been planned for |
| 85,000   | 56,000  | 29,000   |
| Of which:<br>29,100 should be Affordable Housing and 55,900 Market housing | Of which:<br>11,200 should be Affordable Housing and 44,800 Market housing  | Of which:<br>17,900 should be Affordable Housing and 11,100 Market housing     |

**Note:** These numbers are subject to verification and will continue to be subject to monitoring and review. Additionally, further forecasts may become available during the preparation of the JSP.

3.7 The 29,000 additional homes which have not yet been planned for are likely to come forward from a combination of sources which would include:

- sites from within the existing urban area,
- these will mostly be on previously developed land or 'brown field sites'; land which has been underused or used for other purposes no longer required, and sites which have been identified for development but which may be able to provide a greater number of housing units than previously estimated;

and

- sites for development outside the existing urban areas,
- These could include development on the edge of Bristol (urban extensions), within or adjoining existing towns or settlements or a 'new town' opportunity, or a number of very small opportunities across a number of villages in other locations.

### The supply of affordable homes

3.8 The SHMA has identified a need for 29,100 affordable homes from the overall total of 85,000 across the Wider Bristol HMA. This equates to 34.2% of the total housing need, and would require the delivery of 1,455 affordable homes, on average each year. Over the period 2006 to 2014:

- 28,550 new homes have been completed in total
- Of which 6,350 affordable homes have been completed (an annual average of 794 per year).
- The rate of delivery of affordable homes has been 22.2%. (within the Wider Bristol HMA)

To meet the level of need identified by the SHMA will therefore be very challenging. The additional number of affordable homes expected to be needed beyond those already identified is 17,900.

- 3.9 Local planning policies are likely to continue to seek a percentage contribution from future allocations. Recent delivery of affordable homes has fallen across the WoE, due in part to the high cost of delivery of sites and challenges of viability. It is therefore likely that other mechanisms will be required to achieve the level of affordable housing needed (29,100).
- 3.10 In addition to the established approach of seeking a percentage of affordable housing from sites, National Planning Policy Guidance asks authorities to consider increasing the total amount of housing to increase the amount of affordable homes delivered. The OAN figure has already included a 7.5% increase in the housing number to address affordable housing need. A modest housing increase could be considered to provide further affordable homes, however, using this method to meet the affordable housing requirement, could lead to a substantial over provision of housing sites beyond which the market can sustain or deliver. Furthermore, this could lead to a failure to build on the more challenging brownfield sites and result in greater pressure on green field land. This approach also cannot guarantee more affordable homes or more affordable homes in the areas of greatest need.
- 3.11 There are a number of other approaches which could be considered to increase the delivery of affordable homes in the WoE, which include:
1. Introducing public subsidy to improve the viability of developments to deliver affordable housing;
    - working with the Homes and Communities Agency and the registered provider partners to maximise the public subsidy available for affordable housing and associated infrastructure to improve the viability of proposals
    - using subsidy to deliver any affordable housing shortfall and /or fund additional affordable homes above the policy requirement on suitable sites.
  2. Increasing the percentage of affordable housing sought across the HMA – maximising the delivery of affordable homes where sites are viable.
  3. Providing public land at a discounted value to maximise affordable housing delivery.
- 3.12 The implications of the requirement for affordable housing will need to be considered at examination as part of the overall viability and deliverability of the JSP.

### Consultation Question

4. Are we planning for the right number of homes?  
Is there anything else we should take into consideration regarding the number of homes?
5. What needs to happen to ensure the homes we need are built by 2036?
6. What needs to happen to ensure enough of the homes built are affordable?



### **The need for employment land and floorspace**

- 3.13 It is important for the future sustainable growth of the WoE, that the right employment opportunities are available to communities and that an appropriate level of employment land is available in the right locations. Whilst the need for land for jobs is important to our future growth, the extent of land needed for employment is significantly less than that for housing. Much of the employment land in the area is of low density, with opportunities for more efficient use.
- 3.14 An Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has been commissioned. It will provide an objective assessment of the employment land / floorspace needs over the period 2016 to 2036 for the Functional Economic Market Area. The Functional Economic Market Area is the area over which the local economy and its key markets operate. (The description of this area and how it is defined will be set out in the EDNA Report).
- 3.15 The EDNA will provide an assessment of the needs for office, industrial and warehouse employment floorspace and land for the Functional Economic Market Area defined. The study will not identify the employment floor space requirements of retail or other service sectors. These assessments will be carried out separately once the provision for housing growth is established.
- 3.16 Early indications of the findings of the EDNA suggest that:
- the WoE can be identified as a Functional Economic Market Area, based on the critical economic mass and key supply linkages within the area; and
  - there is unlikely to be a significant deficit of employment land across the WoE, taking into account projections of future growth<sup>4</sup>.

### **Consultation Question**

- 7. Have we identified the right employment issues?**
- 8. Where should new employment land be located?**

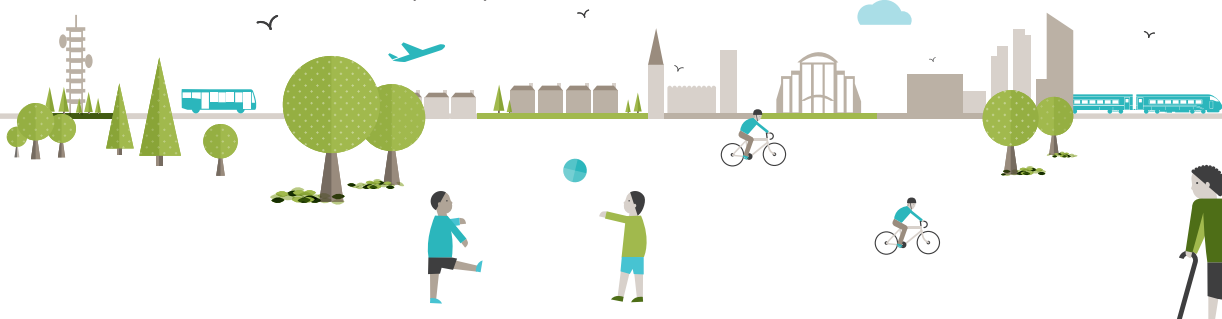
<sup>4</sup> Oxford Economics have provided projections of employment growth which have been taking into account in the preparation of the SHMA and the EDNA. These are available as background evidence.

## Chapter 4 Maximising the potential of our urban areas

- 4.1 In order to deliver sustainable development and a high quality of place, the four authorities believe that the best places to meet the development needs of the future should be within our existing cities and towns; especially on previously developed – brownfield – land. This has been a central plank of our development strategy in recent years and helps to minimise the need to develop on greenfield sites. Regeneration and investment in our built up areas is encouraged and helps to draw on and support existing job opportunities, facilities and services. It is also a more effective way to build upon existing transport infrastructure and to deliver investment in the transport system, particularly cycling and walking initiatives and improved local bus services.
- 4.2 The government's National Planning Policy Framework identifies that encouraging 'the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land)' is one of the core land use planning principles that should underpin plan development. Ministers have recently announced a range of initiatives that focus on bringing brownfield land into use and have indicated the importance of this source of development opportunities.
- 4.3 Acknowledging the benefits, there are many challenges and questions in this approach:
- Are there sufficient and deliverable development opportunities to meet our needs and will they provide the right type and mix of development that is required?
  - What mechanisms are there to bring forward sites that may be challenging to deliver?
  - Is there a danger of harmful over development? What will the impact be on infrastructure, schools, health facilities and open space?
- How can we ensure the location of employment and housing development helps address social and economic inequality in our urban and rural areas?
- 4.4 The risks of a reliance on brownfield delivery are clear. If the development does not come forward, will our plans contain sufficient flexibility and opportunity for development needs to be met, when they are needed.
- 4.5 This chapter explores the opportunities for continuing to make the best use of land in our existing urban areas. It considers where the potential for development may exist. It explores whether the use of brownfield land in the future could deliver even higher rates of development than in recent years.

### Assessing the potential

- 4.6 In recent years a high proportion of new homes have been delivered on brownfield land in urban areas. This process has been aided by new approaches to urban density, and new thinking about the nature of liveable cities and towns and the trends in the type of accommodation we seek.
- 4.7 The four UAs are carrying out a detailed assessment of the potential of existing urban areas to deliver land to meet development needs. This assessment will be available early next year and will be used to help inform the preparation of the draft JSP.
- 4.8 The assessment will focus on opportunities within the existing urban areas including Bristol and Weston-super-Mare, as these areas are most likely to offer brownfield potential. The assessment will also examine opportunities within other sizeable urban areas in the wider Bristol Housing Market Area (HMA).



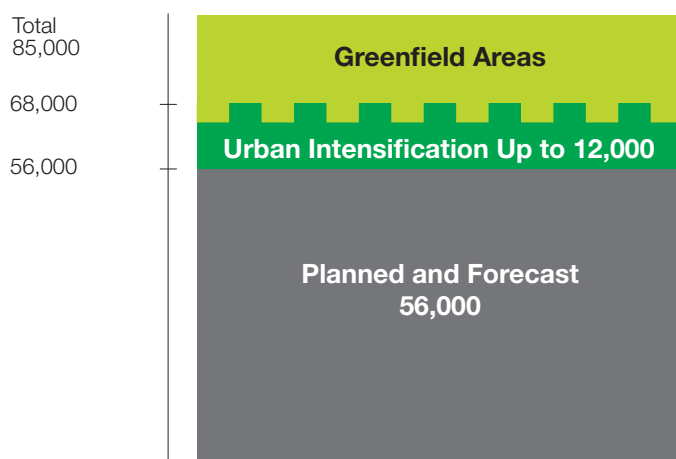
- 4.9 Opportunities for maximising the potential of existing land may result for example from:
- the change of use of non-residential brown field land to residential – where the previous use is no longer required or the most efficient use for the land
  - Identifying land which is currently underused and has potential for residential development
  - Increasing the density of development:
    - on allocated sites by reappraising and increasing their development potential
    - on existing sites where the opportunity for redevelopment arises
- 4.10 An increase in development within the urban areas will have implications for existing infrastructure, including transport infrastructure and the delivery of sustainable transport solutions. This will need to be taken into account in the work to confirm the future capacity of the urban areas.
- 4.11 Enabling a step change in the increase in development within the urban area may require the use of incentives to the land owner or developer. What such incentives could be and how they could be used will need detailed work. However, these may include the use of subsidies as set out in Chapter 3 – or the involvement of the councils and other agencies to enable sites to be made development ready.

### How much development could be accommodated in our urban areas?

- 4.12 Until the assessment is completed, robust estimates are not possible. However, we know that there has been a significant amount of delivery from the urban areas in the past and that this is likely to continue.
- 4.13 Table 4.1 sets out in a simple form how the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for the wider Bristol HMA can be delivered from known sources and where additional sources of development will need to be identified. The greater the proportion of housing which comes from development within existing urban areas, the smaller the need will be for development from other locations. However, it is unlikely that

brownfield sites alone will be suitable for all types of housing required to meet the identified needs in the Wider Bristol HMA.

Figure 4.1 Anticipated source of development land to meet the Objectively Assessed Need for housing for the period 2016–2036



**Note:** The detailed quantum of development to be sourced by maximising the potential of our existing urban areas and from locations outside the existing urban areas, is subject to ongoing research.

The 56,000 planned and predicted new homes in the wider Bristol HMA, have been identified from:

- existing site allocations, planning permissions and known sites to be allocated (c 44,000 tbc)
- predicted development arising from small sites during the period from 2016 to 2036 (c.12,000 tbc)

Approximately 60% of the planned and forecast land is anticipated to be brownfield development.

### Consultation Question

9. Is our priority of building more homes in Bristol and our main towns appropriate and how can this approach be achieved?



## Chapter 5 Spatial scenarios

- 5.1 The previous chapters set out how we establish the amount of potential development already identified through existing plans and the potential contribution from other sources, particularly the use of brownfield land. Together this comprises about 56,000 dwellings. The starting point is that when compared against the housing need figure identified by the SHMA of 85,000 dwellings this leaves a potential shortfall of about 29,000 dwellings to 2036.
- 5.2 This chapter explains how the potential new development opportunities to address the continuing need for new homes and employment land are identified. This involves a process of identifying a wide range of strategic locations where new strategic development could take place and then considering how different options might be combined into spatial scenarios. These can then be tested against both the shortfall identified by the SHMA evidence and any alternative growth levels.
- 5.3 It is important to emphasise that no decisions have been made at this stage as the technical information needed to assess the suitability of potential locations is currently not yet fully available. No preference is indicated for any of the locations referred to in this document and no capacities are identified. All locations will be considered as equal contenders from the start of the process. Whilst a number of the strategic locations may be opposed by local communities other stakeholders it is important that they are assessed as part of a transparent plan-making process. Specific local concerns will need to be considered alongside the strategic need for homes and employment opportunities. The purpose of the Issues and Options consultation is to explain the context and scale of the challenge and set out a framework for the assessment of alternative scenarios to deliver development needs. How locations perform in sustainability terms and potential capacities will be assessed at the next stage of the plan-making process; preparation of the Draft JSP. The views of communities and stakeholders arising from this consultation will also be taken into consideration when preparing the next stages of the JSP.
- 5.4 It is important to emphasise that given the strategic nature of the document the locations identified are illustrative only and must not be used to imply detailed development proposals. However, it is also important that all reasonable alternatives are considered.
- 5.5 The purpose of this stage is to indicate the broad strategic locations where development may be possible. The feedback received will help inform the next stage of the JSP where an assessment will be made of the relative sustainability and suitability of different options, and how these might be combined in ways which best address housing needs in accordance with the spatial objectives. They are also the building blocks from which alternative spatial scenarios can be constructed.
- 5.6 Between them the strategic locations are likely to include the principal areas where new residential and employment growth may eventually be allocated. However, following testing, not all of the defined options will necessarily be suitable to be taken forward and other sites and opportunities will need to be considered as the plan making process progresses.



## Classifying the strategic locations

- 5.7 In order to understand the implications of different potential locations for growth, it is useful to group them in respect of their broad spatial characteristics or typologies. By identifying strategic locations which are broadly similar in terms of their form and function, this helps to draw out the differences between alternative spatial scenarios.
- 5.8 The range of possible strategic locations can be characterised as follows:

**Urban intensification:** opportunities to deliver additional development within urban areas. This will be over and above what is currently planned and forecast to be delivered.

**Urban extension:** planned expansion of the urban area into adjacent countryside.

**Town expansion:** planned expansion of existing towns detached from the existing urban areas.

**New settlement:** there are no current proposals for new towns.

**Other settlements/locations:** covers a range of generally smaller scale opportunities such as village expansion or clusters of sites which together could form a strategic option. This could include options which are wholly or predominantly employment focused.

**Dispersed growth:** an aggregate of very small scale opportunities, perhaps across a number of villages.

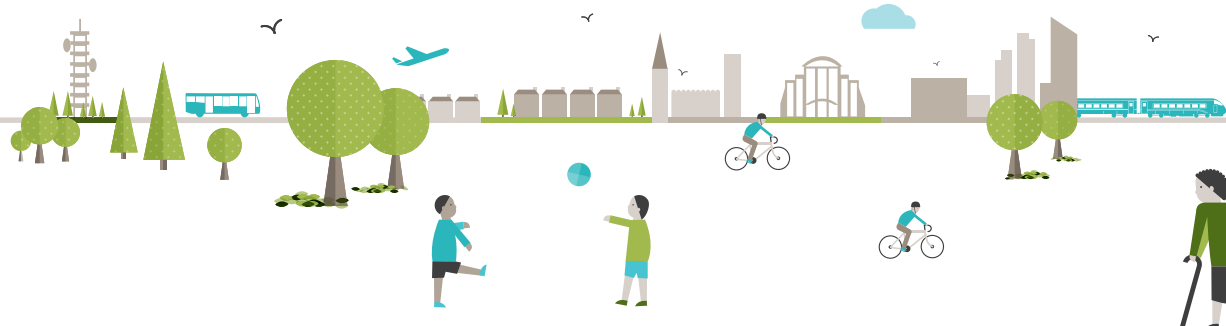
If the West of England (WoE) is unable to address identified needs within the plan area in sustainable locations, then it will be necessary to discuss with neighbouring authorities, through the duty to co-operate, the potential to deliver growth in locations inside the West of England.

## Identifying the strategic locations

- 5.9 The strategic locations are sites or clusters of locations put forward primarily by landowners and developers but also from other sources. They represent areas or general locations which have the potential to deliver strategic options in terms of homes and or jobs over and above sites currently proposed in existing local plans or other documents. They therefore represent new development opportunities..
- 5.10 In order to focus on strategic options a threshold of about 500 dwellings and/or 500 jobs is used as the basis for identifying strategic locational options. It is recognised that there will be smaller sites or combinations of locations which will eventually make a contribution, but the aim of this stage of the process is to identify the principal options.
- 5.11 The main source for the definition of strategic locations is the call for sites used to inform the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), as well as sites identified from other sources or proposed by the Unitary Authorities (UAs). These may comprise stand-alone proposals or perhaps three or four smaller sites around a settlement which in combination comprise a strategic location.
- 5.12 At this stage of the process it is important to consider all potential options. However, based on environmental assessments, urban extension options at Bath, where evidence shows development would have an adverse impact on heritage and landscape assets (specifically the World Heritage Site and the Cotswolds AONB) have been excluded as possible strategic locations.
- 5.13 The schedule below sets out the identified strategic locations – these are illustrative potential opportunities and must not be interpreted as relating to specific sites. They represent locations which could be considered for housing and/or employment uses at different scales of development. While most are likely to be primarily residential there may be locations which are employment focussed such as Bristol Airport.

Table 5.1: Strategic locations: classified by broad spatial characteristics (typologies)

| Typology                    | Unitary Authority | Possible strategic locations (indicative only) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Urban intensification       | BCC               | Bristol  |
|                             | SGC               | Communities of Bristol N & E fringe.           |
|                             | NSC               | Weston-super-Mare                              |
| Urban extension             | SGC               | East of Kingswood/Warmley                      |
|                             |                   | Bridgegate/Oldland Common                      |
|                             |                   | North of M4/M5                                 |
|                             | NSC/BCC           | South West Bristol                             |
|                             | NSC               | Weston-super-Mare                              |
|                             | B&NES/BCC         | Hicks Gate                                     |
|                             | B&NES             | Whitchurch                                     |
| Town expansion              | NSC               | Clevedon                                       |
|                             |                   | Nailsea  |
|                             |                   | Portishead                                     |
|                             | B&NES             | Keynsham                                       |
|                             |                   | Midsomer Norton and Radstock                   |
|                             | SGC               | Thornbury                                      |
| Other settlements/locations | BCC/SGC           | Avonmouth(employment)/Severnside               |
|                             |                   | Charfield                                      |
|                             | SGC               | Pucklechurch                                   |
|                             |                   | Winterbourne, Frampton, Coalpit Heath          |
|                             | NSC               | Backwell                                       |
|                             |                   | Banwell  |
|                             |                   | Bristol Airport (employment)                   |
|                             |                   | Churchill                                      |
|                             |                   | Long Ashton                                    |
|                             |                   | Pill   |
|                             |                   | Yatton   |
|                             | B&NES             | Peasedown St John                              |
|                             |                   | Saltford                                       |
|                             |                   | Temple Cloud/Clutton                           |
| Dispersed                   | SGC               | South Gloucestershire                          |
|                             | NSC               | North Somerset                                 |
|                             | B&NES             | Bath & NE Somerset                             |



5.14 The general location of these locational options is illustrated on the following map (Figure 9). The symbols relate to the broad typography. This provides a visual overview of the pattern of potential development options across the sub-region and provides the starting point for the consideration of spatial scenarios. These must therefore not be seen as allocations – they represent the principal potential strategic alternatives to be considered. Given the character of the dispersed options, these are not depicted on the following diagram.

### Mapping the strategic locations

This plan indicates the broad geographical location (Figure 9) of all the options identified in Table 5.1. Locations are illustrative only and must not be taken to imply any specific development site or a preference for identified options.

5.15 In order to use the strategic locations to inform the spatial scenarios, it is helpful to have an indication of potential capacity. While some of the possible locations have capacity figures associated with them (for example, proposals put forward by landowners/developers through the call for sites), their presentation in this document is not intended to equate to known development proposals and site capacities. Instead, the approach assumes that the different typologies would generally deliver different scales of growth (an urban extension would be much larger than a village expansion for example) and could deliver a range of growth (low, medium and high). This is a fairly coarse approach as some options may be much more constrained than others, but it provides an indication of potential capacity required at this stage of the plan-making process. The broad assumptions made are as follows:

Table 5.2: Indicative dwelling/job capacities of locational typologies for testing

|                             | Low      | Medium    | High   |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|--------|
| Urban extension             | 500-1000 | 1000-3000 | 3000+  |
| Town expansion              | 500      | 500-2000  | 2000+  |
| New settlement              | 5000     | 10000     | 10000+ |
| Other settlements/locations | 500      | 500-1000  | 1000+  |
| Dispersed                   | 500      | 500-1000  | 1000+  |

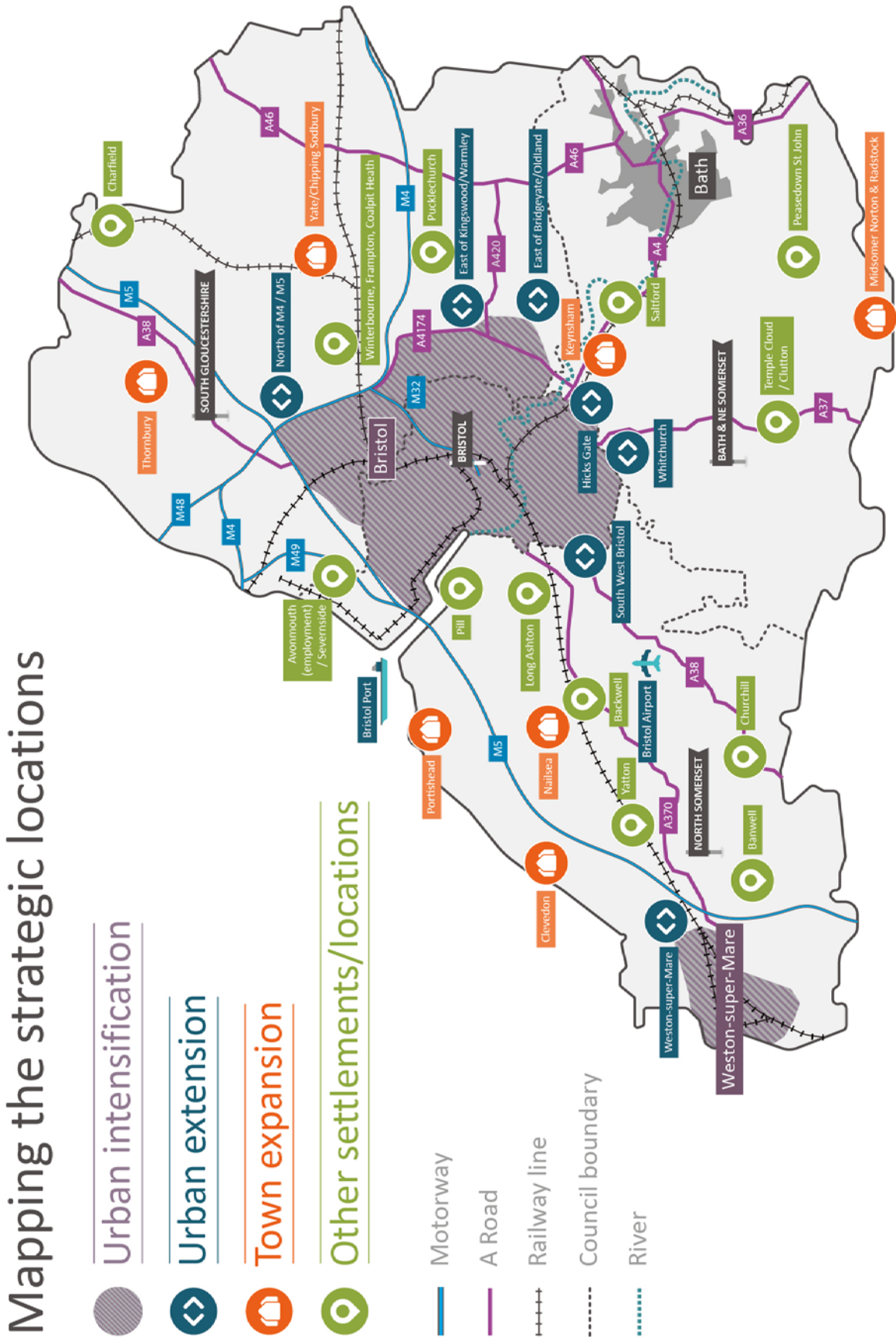
Note: Given the nature of the strategic planning exercise, the smallest capacity is assumed to be about 500 dwellings/jobs. There are no new settlements currently proposed.

### Transport appraisal of strategic locations

5.16 An initial transport appraisal has been undertaken for each of the strategic locations. The assessments have focused on quality of travel choices (and opportunities to reduce car dependence), the scale of congestion in each location and how locational options relate to programmed investments. Consideration has been given to the issues faced at present and in future, based on varying potential scales of development at each location and including emerging technologies such as broadband. Further details can be found in the accompanying transport technical note which is available on our website.

5.17 Urban intensification options would, in general, benefit from the wider range of travel choices available in the urban areas. However, there could be significant impacts on congestion if action is not taken to minimise car use. These options would be characterised by high-intensity development in places with good access by public transport, walking and cycling to jobs and local services. There could be opportunities for promoting largely car-free development to support high-quality place-making and encourage sustainable travel choices.

Figure 9: Map identifying potential Strategic Locations





5.18 The performance of urban extensions will vary, based on their location in relation to existing transport corridors and established urban centres. Proximity to the centre of the urban area is an important criterion, as levels of car use typically rise as this distance increases. Locations next to existing corridors, with the opportunity to provide high quality public transport connections, would be expected to perform better. Conversely, locations poorly related to existing transport networks or requiring considerable new physical and social infrastructure will perform less well.

In all cases, there will be a need to provide comprehensive transport packages to provide a good range of travel choices and mitigate the impacts of additional traffic.

5.19 The performance of town expansions could also differ, depending on the quality of current transport choices. Most towns considered have higher than average car use, although areas within these towns that are close to rail stations have slightly lower levels of car use. Again, comprehensive transport packages would be required, although it should be recognised that there could be limited opportunities to improve travel choices, with a greater focus on mitigating the effects of additional traffic.

5.20 In the case of new settlements, it will be necessary to start from a very limited base in terms of travel choices. Large-scale development would be much more likely to create sufficient critical mass to support a strong business case for significant investment in transport improvements, which could include new rail stations and new bus connections. However, the locations of these developments would still tend to favour travel by car for many journeys and it would be difficult to mitigate the effects of additional traffic on other parts of the network.

5.21 In other settlements, including villages, travel options are limited, although local congestion is, in many cases, less severe than the more urban locations. There are generally limited opportunities to limit car dependency for new developments in these locations. Generally small-scale development would take place with relatively modest packages of transport improvements, but in most cases car use would remain high.

### **Spatial scenarios**

5.22 Combinations of options need to be identified which could be capable of broadly meeting the housing and job requirements identified, consistent with the suggested WoE vision and spatial objectives, as well as reflecting the Joint Transport Study findings, infrastructure requirements and the conclusions of the area profiles. This would then be subject to further testing to ensure they can be delivered.

5.23 The alternative scenarios illustrate different approaches and will eventually lead to a preferred approach. This is an iterative process which will involve testing and refinement of different combinations of locational options and different scales of development in accordance with sustainable development principles.



## Defining the spatial scenarios

5.24 Chapters 4 and 5 identified the baseline in terms of existing capacity through the identification of planned and forecast growth and maximising the opportunities for utilising brownfield land, such as through urban intensification. The next stage is to identify a range of spatial scenarios to illustrate how any remaining plan period shortfall might be addressed in a way which most effectively delivers the spatial objectives. The identification of spatial scenarios must not be used to imply any preference for a particular approach. They have been chosen to reflect a range of policy positions in order to emphasise the differences between them. For example, several of the scenarios would require the Green Belt to be amended.

5.25 As a starting point for discussion through the Issues and Options consultation, five theoretical spatial scenarios have been identified to assess different approaches of achieving the vision and spatial objectives.

These are:

1. **Protection of Green Belt.**
2. **Concentration at Bristol urban area.**
3. **Transport focus.**
4. **A more even spread of development across the sub-region – growth at Bristol, but also other towns and expanded settlements.**
5. **New settlement (or a limited number of expanded settlements).**

5.26 Having identified a range of different spatial scenarios, these can then be illustrated using locations set out in the schedule of possible strategic locations. This assists the overall assessment of spatial scenarios by helping to highlight the key differences.

5.28 Each spatial scenario has been assessed in terms of how well it is likely to perform against the plan's spatial objectives as set out in Chapter 3, including the potential to accommodate the housing shortfall as described in Chapters 4 and 5. This initial assessment is set out in the table following the general description of each scenario.

## Consultation Question

10. Have all the reasonable strategic locations been identified? Are there any others we should consider?
11. Do you have comments on the suitability of any of the strategic locations?
12. In your opinion, do some strategic locations have advantages or disadvantages in terms of addressing the critical issues identified in Chapter 2?



## Spatial scenario 1: Protection of Green Belt

The government attaches great importance to Green Belts and boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The WoE Green Belt is highly valued by local communities and has made a substantial contribution to the character and sense of place of the plan area. It prevents sprawl and separates existing towns and villages whilst also encouraging urban regeneration and the use of brownfield land. The objective of the first scenario is to assess the impact of additional growth assuming no change to the existing Green Belt. The extent

of the Green Belt within the WoE is shown on the following plan.

The possible strategic locations which could be considered to make up this scenario are simply those locations not located within the Green Belt. Not all of these locations are likely to be required depending on the scale of overall housing requirement and the capacity of individual locations however, the map illustrates a possible approach. This would increase reliance on the car and impact on commuting patterns.

Table 5.3: Summary of assessment in relation to spatial objectives set out in Chapter 2

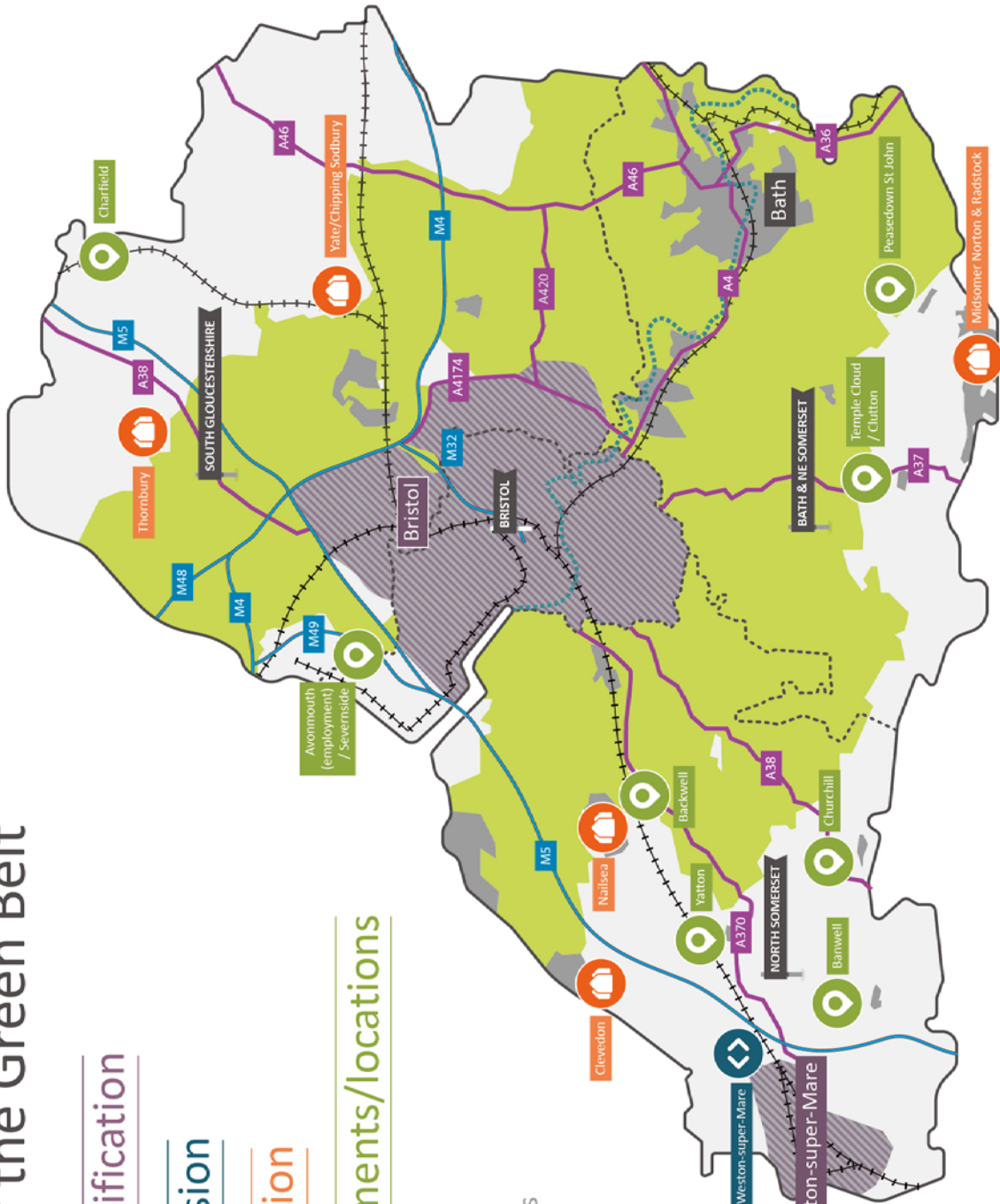
|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Housing and wellbeing</b>        | <p>It is anticipated that by using the non-Green Belt locational options, and making realistic assumptions about potential scales of delivery, there is sufficient capacity to deliver the anticipated target of 29,000 dwellings. Should the housing requirement be increased, then additional sources of supply (such as additional sites, new settlements or development outside WoE) may be required. A wide distribution of sites means that plenty of opportunities are available to meet short term needs. This will include further regeneration/revitalisation of existing towns.</p> <p>Retention of Green Belt means that the focus of development, apart from urban intensification, is further away from the Bristol urban area, resulting in Bristol's housing and affordable housing needs not being met so effectively.</p> |
| <b>Economy</b>                      | <p>Sites are located at some distance from the Bristol urban area. While there will be local benefits it is potentially less effective at supporting sub-regional growth than other scenarios.</p>  |
| <b>Transport and infrastructure</b> | <p>Some locations outside the Green Belt are peripheral to the main concentrations of population, facilities and services and not generally well related to principal transport corridors. It would be expected that this would result in more commuting, increased reliance on car journeys and less use of other modes than other scenarios. It is also unlikely to provide the thresholds of development that will facilitate substantial new transport investment. Consideration needs to be given to those locations which already have significant growth proposed and the impact of any additional development on the delivery of sustainable places and balanced communities.</p>   |
| <b>Environment</b>                  | <p>This scenario could have a greater impact on rural landscapes than scenarios 2 and 3.</p> <p>The current extent and form of the Green Belt has played an important role in the planning of the sub-region and there remain significant areas where sustainable growth could be located whilst protecting its general extent. This scenario maximises the retention of this valued countryside which acts as a setting for Bristol, Bath, other towns and villages.</p> <p>However, the use of locations outside the Green Belt means that much of the new development is remote from Bristol, and could be perceived to adding to urbanisation elsewhere.</p>  |

Figure 10: Illustrative diagram – spatial scenario 1 – protection of Green Belt

# Protection of the Green Belt

- Urban intensification
- Urban extension
- Town expansion
- Other settlements/locations

- Green Belt
- Existing settlements
- Motorway
- A Road
- Railway line
- Council boundary
- River



**Note:** Locations are illustrative only and must not be taken to imply any specific development site or a preference for identified options

## Spatial scenario 2: Concentration at Bristol urban area

Bristol is an important and vibrant regional centre and the main focus for jobs, housing, services and facilities within the plan area. The purpose of the JSP is to develop a spatial strategy to meet the needs of the Bristol housing market area. The objective of this scenario is to test the implications of focusing as much growth as possible within and adjacent to the Bristol urban area to maximise accessibility to

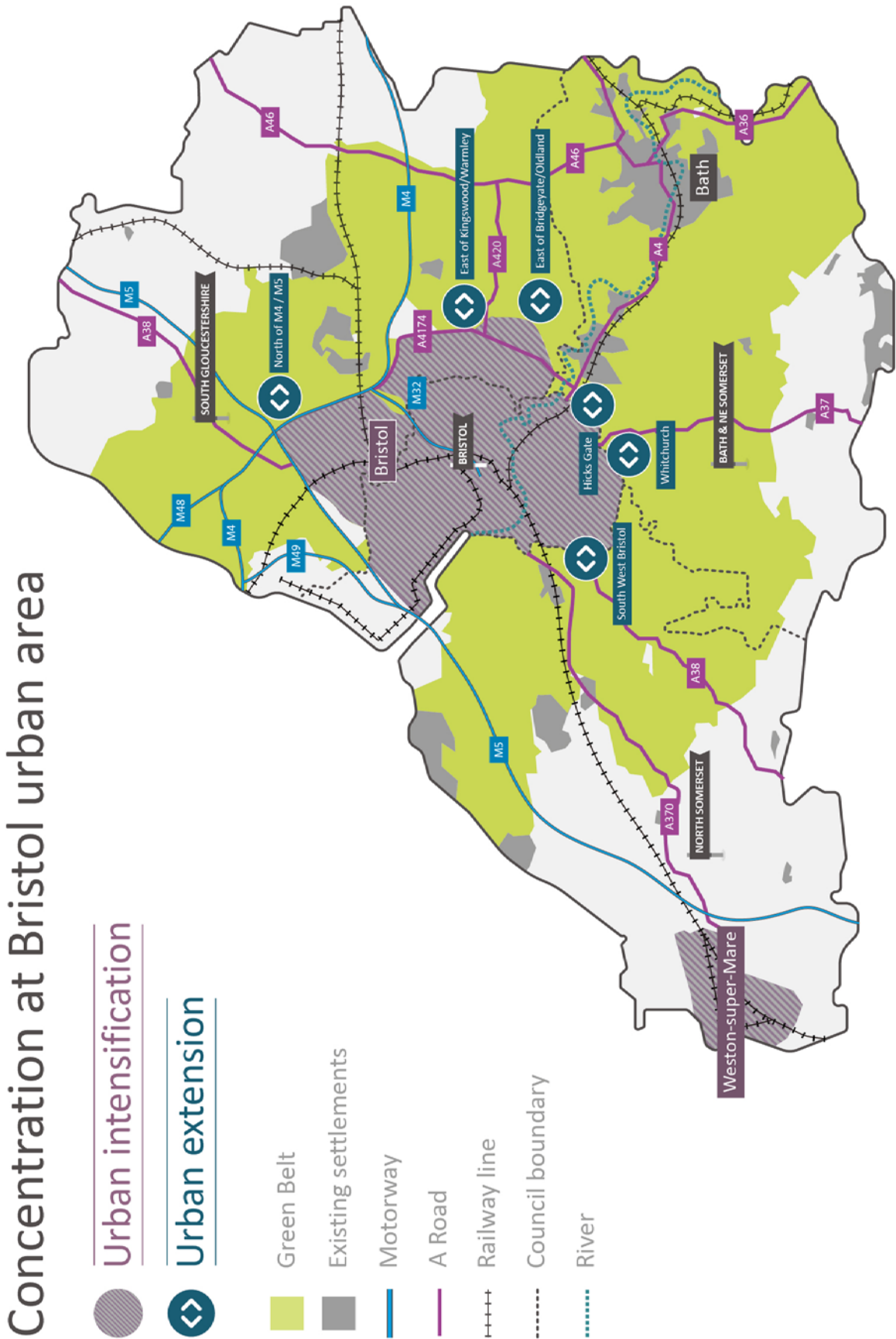
jobs and services whilst minimising development in other parts of the plan area. The scenario specifically excludes strategic locations located elsewhere across the sub-region.

This scenario would have a significant adverse impact on the current extent of the Green Belt.

Table 5.4: Summary of assessment in relation to spatial objectives as set out in Chapter 2

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Housing and wellbeing        | Subject to further testing, there are potential urban extensions which could provide the anticipated shortfall of 29,000 dwellings. Additional growth can be accommodated through additional locations/larger scales of development. Housing will tend to be delivered on large strategic sites, potentially reducing choice and short term supply, although it is well-related to address Bristol's needs. Urban extensions will tend to have long lead-in times and may require significant infrastructure provision and mitigation measures.   |
| Economy                      | Growth is focussed on the main economic centre and therefore this scenario has the potential to support the sub-regional economic objectives. New infrastructure will be concentrated at Bristol.   |
| Transport and infrastructure | Beneficial in focussing growth as close as possible to where the majority of needs arise and would be positive in terms of encouraging alternatives to the car, but raises issues about the effective delivery of infrastructure and potential to increase congestion. However, not all the locations would perform equally, dependent on their proximity to the main employment centres and/or the extent of sustainable transport investment which could be justified.  |
| Environment                  | <p>Significant adverse impact on the extent of the existing Green Belt and potential loss of valued countryside on the edge of the city. Potential to result in sprawl and coalescence with existing settlements contrary to national policy if not managed effectively. Will require significant amendment to the inner edge of the Green Belt. The latter could be used to protect key fingers of countryside extending into the urban area.</p> <p>Concentrated development at Bristol will mean less impact in other more rural parts of the sub-region.</p> <p>Urban extensions may provide the opportunity to implement more significant climate change measures and environmental mitigation through economies of scale.</p> |

Figure 11: Illustrative diagram – spatial scenario 2 – major concentration





## Spatial scenario 3: Transport focussed – proximity to central Bristol and orientation towards public transport

This scenario is focussed on locations assessed to perform better in terms of access to sustainable travel choices and likely local and strategic congestion impacts. Urban areas that already have good travel choices are the priority for development. In these locations distances travelled tend to be shorter, encouraging walking and cycling. In addition, the critical mass of people in urban locations supports more viable public transport. A second priority for development are locations closer to central Bristol. A focus on development in south Bristol will help bring housing and future employment together. The third priority would be to allow

development at locations that have good rail links into the central areas. It would not be appropriate to propose development at all the potential locations identified, as a smaller number may better support more effective investment in transport solutions. The impact of development on existing congestion within urban areas means that a multi-modal package of transport measures is essential to support this scenario.

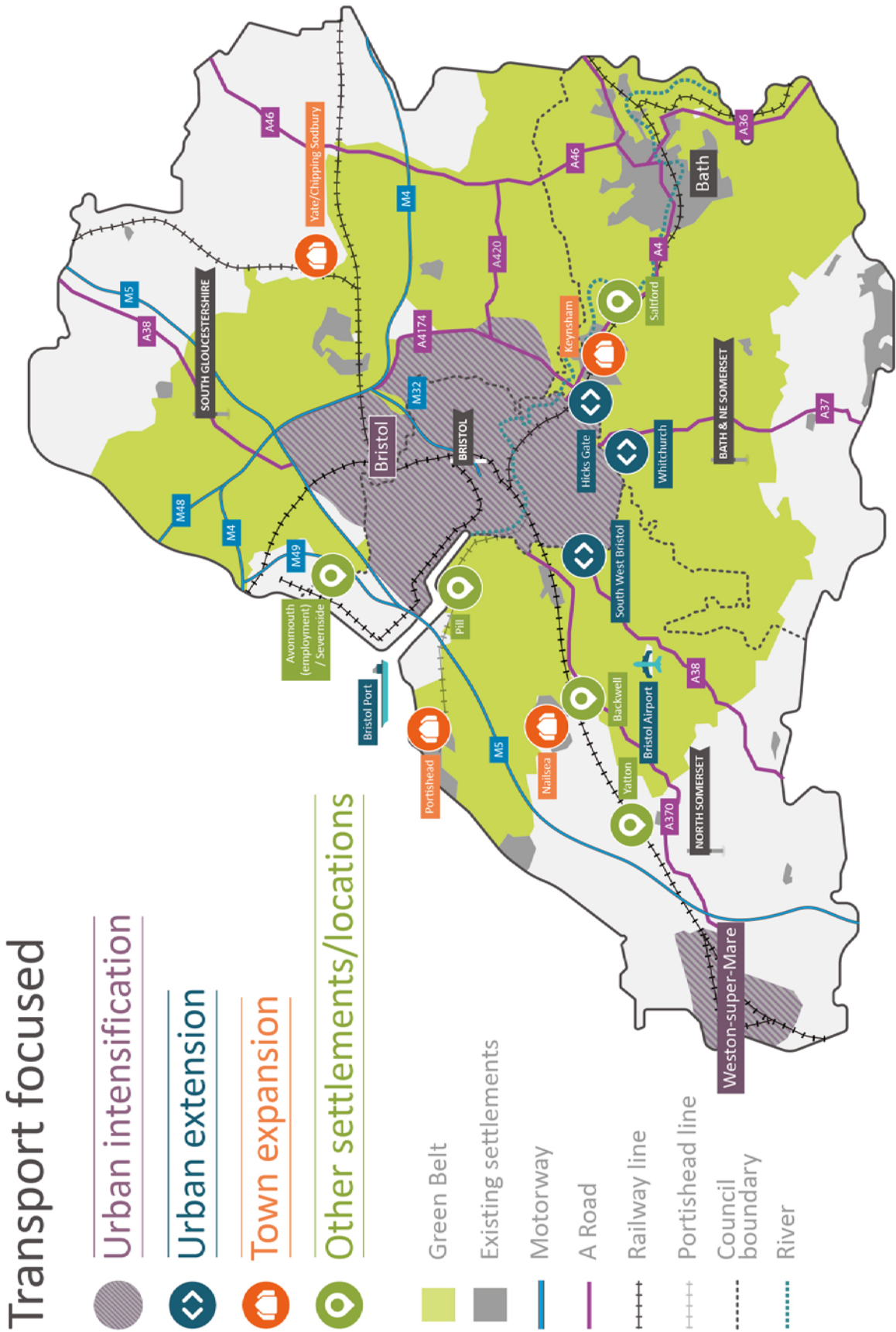
Scenario includes several locational options which would have a significant adverse impact on the current extent of the Green Belt and the setting of existing towns.

Table 5.5: Summary of assessment in relation to spatial objectives as set out in Chapter 2

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Housing and wellbeing        | Scenario could accommodate the 29,000 dwellings. Further growth if evidenced as required, could be accommodated as additional nodes or capacity along identified transport corridors. Development would be delivered through a more limited range of sites than other scenarios thereby potentially limiting choice. It might be more difficult to enable short term housing supply if needed, particularly if major transport investment is required.  |
| Economy                      | Developments are well related to Bristol and could provide a range of locations and workers to support sub-regional economic development objectives.  |
| Transport and infrastructure | Locations are prioritised which have been assessed to perform better in terms of access to sustainable travel choices and congestion impacts. There would be a combination of intensification, South Bristol focussed urban extensions and public transport focussed development, with further emphasis on walking and cycling, and with appropriate thresholds of development to support significant transport interventions.  |
| Environment                  | <p>This option entails more concentrated development of a larger scale in each location which may help to deliver more substantial environmental enhancement and mitigation.</p> <p>Green Belt would be significantly affected and is likely to impact on the character and setting of existing settlements – may need to consider a combination of amending Green Belt on the inner edge or along growth corridors. The latter could be used to protect key fingers of countryside extending into the urban area.</p> <p>Opportunity to create sustainable new communities with good accessibility to urban areas.</p> |



Figure 12: Illustrative diagram – spatial scenario 3 – transport focussed



**Note:** Locations are illustrative only and must not be taken to imply any specific development site or a preference for identified options

## Spatial scenario 4: A more even spread of development across the sub-region – growth at Bristol, but also other towns and expanded settlements

The WoE is a diverse area with cities, towns, villages and rural areas exhibiting a range of qualities and characteristics and experiencing local issues and opportunities. This scenario explores the benefits of either a more even spread of growth across the plan area using a mix of different typologies and/or more bespoke solutions to address local objectives or infrastructure deficits. This could include a mix of urban extensions, town expansions or development at other settlements with perhaps different approaches in different unitary authority areas to reflect local community aspirations.

A greater range of sites is also likely to have housing delivery benefits in terms of providing more variety and choice. No diagram is presented for this scenario as there is a range of different locational options (as illustrated in figure 9) and scales of growth which could be included.

Table 5.6: Summary of assessment in relation to spatial objectives as set out in Chapter 2

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Housing and wellbeing        | Locational options provide choice of sites and at different scales of growth to accommodate the existing housing requirement. Potential to provide a mix and choice of housing sites to support delivery. Could perform well in respect of providing opportunities to address any short term housing need. |
| Economy                      | Less focussed on Bristol, but potential to support local objectives.   |
| Transport and infrastructure | If the overall effect is a more dispersed pattern of development, then it is possible that this scenario will be much less effective in transport terms, but may provide opportunity for targeted investment in certain areas.   |
| Environment                  | May be some impact on the Green Belt depending on the choice of type and mix of sites identified within any particular area, but overall form and function of the Green Belt likely to remain largely intact. Range of development opportunities could stimulate different urban design solutions.         |

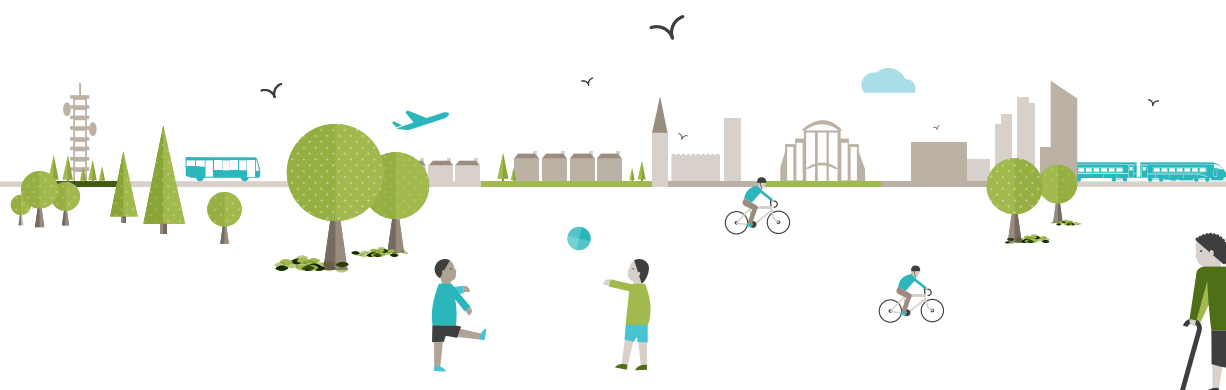
## Spatial scenario 5: New settlement (or a limited number of expanded settlements)

This scenario considers opportunities to concentrate development into a single or small number of new strategic locations which would then complement the overall functioning of the plan area. This could include new settlements which could develop over the plan period and beyond, or the expansion of existing settlements.

Delivery is potentially an issue with this option as there is no current proposal for a new settlement or the major expansion of an existing settlement. Implementation of projects of this nature are likely to have a lengthy lead-in time. As no new settlements are currently proposed, no diagram is presented in respect of this scenario.

Table 5.7: Summary of assessment in relation to spatial objectives as set in Chapter 2

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Housing and wellbeing        | Delivery would be concentrated in very few locations, potential reducing choice, and less well related to meeting Bristol's needs. Proposals are likely to have long lead-in times but could provide growth beyond 2036.<br><br>Opportunity to create new mixed and balanced communities. |
| Economy                      | Potential to create significant new employment hubs.  |
| Transport and infrastructure | Likely to require significant transport and other infrastructure, reducing the ability to address existing issues elsewhere. There will be opportunities to design in sustainable travel patterns.  |
| Environment                  | Potential to create sustainable new communities with their own character and sense of place. Unlikely to be a significant impact on the Green Belt, but will mean a significant change to the local environment.  |



- 5.29 The JSP will need to identify the best and most effective approach for the location and delivery of additional strategic housing and employment taking into account the range of spatial scenarios and their assessment in relation to the plan's objectives. Further testing of the constraints and opportunities of each scenario will be required before any decisions are made. This will be undertaken as part of the preparation of the Draft JSP.
- 5.30 If it is concluded that the housing requirement should be greater than the objectively assessed need identified, then additional strategic locations may be needed in the agreed strategy. Likewise, preparation of the JSP might conclude that meeting the full need might cause too much environmental harm and therefore it is inappropriate to seek to deliver it. In this case, the local planning authorities in the WoE will need to liaise with adjoining districts to ascertain their capacity to assisting in housing delivery.

### **Consultation Question**

- 13. Which spatial scenario (or mix of scenarios) is likely to best deliver the plan's objectives as set out on page 16?**
- 14. If a new settlement is a solution, how big should it be and where would you suggest it could go?**
- 15. What transport improvements or measures would be required to support the scenarios?**

## Chapter 6 Next steps and how to comment

- 6.1 Comments on the JSP Issues and Options can be made from 9th November to 29th January. Your views and comments are important. They will help shape the JSP as we go forward to prepare the draft Plan next year.
- 6.2 You can make comments in a number of different ways, online or by sending us your written responses. A webpage has been set up to help you make comments. This is available at: [www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk](http://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk)
- Alternatively if you would prefer to send us your written comments there is a response form that you can use. This is available to download from [www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk](http://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk), or hard copies can be picked up from our libraries or one stop shops. Further details are available on our website [www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk](http://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk)
- 6.3 All comments/completed response forms should be received by 5pm on 29th January 2016.
- 6.4 All comments/completed response forms should be sent either by email or by post to the following addresses:
- Email: [comment@jointplanningwofe.org.uk](mailto:comment@jointplanningwofe.org.uk)
- Post: **West of England Joint Planning Consultation**  
**c/o South Gloucestershire Council**  
**PO Box 299**  
**Corporate Research and Consultation Team**  
**Civic Centre**  
**High Street**  
**Kingswood**  
**Bristol BS15 0DR**
- 6.4 To support this there is an extensive public consultation and engagement programme. Details are available on our website [www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk](http://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk)
- 6.5 Once the consultation closes all responses will be carefully considered and used to help prepare the next stage of the JSP – the Draft Plan. This will be published in September 2016. All the comments made will also be published and made publicly available. Further details of when this will be done and the next steps will be published on our website.
- 6.6 Please note that the responses received, including personal details, cannot be kept confidential. If you are not currently on our consultation database and would like to be kept informed, please email: [info@jointplanningwofe.org.uk](mailto:info@jointplanningwofe.org.uk)
- From time to time we may contact you to seek your views about other planning consultations and projects. Periodically, you may also be invited to give us your views about our service. If you no longer wish to receive correspondence from the council in relation to consultation on planning policy documents, or wish to update the contact details we have for you, please contact us quoting the reference number above.



