



Note on employment land evidence

Bristol Employment Land Study 2019 (ELS) and West of England Employment Land Strategic Needs Assessment 2021 (ELSNA)

In 2018 Bristol City Council commissioned an employment land study (ELS) to examine the demand for and supply of employment land and premises. The study would inform the development of policies in the Bristol Local Plan. The ELS was prepared in the context of the West of England Economic Development Needs Assessment March 2016 which was part of the evidence base for the emerging West of England Joint Spatial Plan.

The consultants appointed to prepare the Bristol ELS were asked to consider how planning objectives outlined in the emerging Bristol Local Plan could be met whilst delivering on the targets for employment space which would be set out in the emerging West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP).

Work on the Bristol ELS was completed in 2019; however, it was not published at that time as the strategic context changed in late 2019. Following the planning inspectors' letters of autumn 2019, it was decided not to progress with the Joint Spatial Plan which was formally withdrawn in April 2020.

A Spatial Development Strategy for the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is now being prepared. This will be part of the development plan and will set out a development strategy for the WECA area. The Bristol Local Plan will be in general conformity with the SDS.

An Employment Land Strategic Needs Assessment (ELSNA) has been commissioned by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to identify the West of England's future strategic employment land needs. This study has been published and can be found on WECA's website. The previously unpublished Bristol ELS has formed part of the background evidence for the ELSNA and the studies can now be read in conjunction with each other. The ELS has now been published and can be found on Bristol City Council's website. Both documents will be used to inform the Spatial Development Strategy and Bristol Local Plan.

The ELSNA and ELS provide important context for consideration of the future provision of employment land in the city, noting demand - including potential structural changes within our economy - and issues for consideration in determining its future supply. These need to be taken into account along with the objectives of the One City economic recovery and renewal strategy, a developing understanding of the implications of COVID on future needs for employment space and the city's response to climate change.

We will develop an employment land strategy that will outline our response to these issues and the work that we will do across a range of our services and with our partners to ensure that the city has the employment space that it needs. The workstream will be led by a cross-service group chaired by John Smith, Director - Economy of Place, and a work programme finalised as soon as possible.

This work will also be informed by area-specific employment land assessments carried out to inform future development plans for Whitehouse Street, Mead Street and other regeneration areas where development may come forward in the near term.

For further information, please email business@bristol.gov.uk.

26 November 2021