

BRISTOL

LOCAL PLAN 2045

SCOPING CONSULTATION

9-30 September 2026



Bristol Local Plan 2045

Scoping Document

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Introduction and how to respond

This Scoping Document sets out background information to the Scoping Consultation and may be helpful to refer to when answering the survey. However, we have designed the survey to be answerable without reading this document. We have included the consultation questions here to aid interpretation of the information and prompt responses to the consultation (which can be accessed here; [Ask Bristol](#))

WHAT IS THE LOCAL PLAN?

The local plan guides how development across Bristol will be shaped. It sets out where new homes, jobs, infrastructure, and community facilities are located and provides clarity for residents, businesses, and developers. The Plan contains policies that ensure development contributes to building strong, healthy communities, creating vibrant places, and responding to the climate and nature crises.

The Bristol Local Plan 2045 will form part of the Development Plan, alongside the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's (MCA) [Spatial Development Strategy](#) and made [Neighbourhood Plans](#). It will also contain an update to the Minerals and Waste Plan for Bristol.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR CURRENT PLAN?



FIG.1 *The local plans for Bristol (adopted, emerging, and new)*

The local plan currently in force comprises the [Core Strategy](#), which we adopted in 2011, the '[Site Allocations and Development Management Policies](#)' adopted in 2014, the [Bristol Central Area Plan](#) adopted in 2015, and the [West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy](#) adopted in 2011. These plans have an end date of 2026. We are replacing this with an [emerging local plan](#), which plans for the period 2022-2040. We have recently consulted on the main modifications to this plan and are progressing towards adopting it in Autumn 2026. The issues raised throughout that process have helped shape our early-stage approach to the [Bristol Local Plan 2045](#).

WHY ARE WE UPDATING THE LOCAL PLAN?

In March 2026, the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#) came into force, introducing a new system for preparing shorter and clearer local plans within a 30-month timetable.

BRISTOL LOCAL PLAN 2045

Bristol is required to prepare its next local plan under the new system. There is also a particular need to consider how Bristol can respond to its housing need. The housing requirement proposed through the Local Plan 2022-2040 meets less than 80% of local housing need as calculated through the national standard method. The government has confirmed that the Council must begin work on a new plan immediately, under the 'new system' of local plan making.

WHAT IS THIS CONSULTATION ABOUT?

This is the first of three consultation stages for the Council's new Local Plan 2045. The purpose of this Scoping Consultation is to gather your thoughts on what should be included in the local plan. This consultation focuses on the major issues and opportunities that will shape Bristol over the period 2045:

- how and where the city can grow and evolve
- the homes and employment sites it needs
- what makes higher density urban living successful
- how development can support healthier communities
- how people move around the city
- the infrastructure needed to support growth
- how planning can respond to climate change and nature recovery
- the vision for minerals and waste planning.

We are also asking how you want us to engage with you as the plan develops.

Once we have gathered responses to this consultation, we will publish a Scoping Consultation Summary, setting out the main issues raised and how we have considered these.

The consultation closes at 5pm on 30 September 2026.

This stage of the local plan preparation process follows the publication of the [Notice of Intention to Commence Plan-Making](#) and [Timetable](#).

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THIS CONSULTATION?

Following the Scoping Consultation, we will progress a Proposed Content and Evidence document, covering a vision, aims and objectives, a spatial strategy, policy approaches, an evidence base summary, and a scoping document for the Strategic Environment Assessment. This will be consulted on from December 2026 to February 2027 – please check the [timetable](#), which is reviewed monthly, for the latest dates.

Feedback from the consultation on the proposed content and evidence consultation will inform the draft Bristol Local Plan 2045, which will set out the planning policies to guide development across Bristol. The Plan will then be published for further public consultation in early 2028. This will be a key opportunity to comment on the full draft Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

ENGAGEMENT

We are asking for your views on the main priorities for Bristol, the issues you think the Plan should address, and how you want us to engage with you throughout the plan-making process.

How this plan fits together

The local plan has a particular role in shaping Bristol's future. It cannot, on its own, determine every aspect of how the city develops or address every challenge Bristol faces. Its role is to make decisions about the use and development of land, buildings and places, and to provide a clear spatial framework for homes, jobs, infrastructure, movement, communities and environment. In doing so, the plan needs to respond to Bristol's wider ambitions, as set out in the [Corporate](#) and [Economic Strategies](#), for a fairer, healthier, more sustainable and prosperous city. Decisions about housing cannot be separated from access to employment, transport and services. Economic growth needs land, infrastructure and connections. Higher-density development needs to create neighbourhoods in which people can live well. Climate resilience and nature recovery need to be considered in decisions about where and how the city grows. The plan considers these issues together, focusing on the outcomes that planning can help achieve and the relationships between them.

THE WIDER PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Bristol Local Plan does not operate in isolation. It will sit within a wider framework of regional and local plans and strategies:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026 – this is the government’s policies for plan-making and how planning decisions are to be decided.

West of England Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) – will provide the regional, cross-boundary spatial framework, including housing need apportionment, strategic employment land and strategic infrastructure.

Bristol Local Plan 2045 – will provide the statutory planning framework for Bristol, translating strategic requirements and Bristol’s needs into spatial policies and site allocations.

Neighbourhood plans* – planning policies made by communities to shape development in their area.

Design codes and masterplans* – provide more detailed, site- and area-specific planning guidance and implementation.

Together these documents will influence how Bristol grows and changes to 2045.

* Neighbourhood plans and design codes may be prepared for specific areas where appropriate, reflecting local priorities and circumstances; they are not required to provide comprehensive coverage across the whole area.

MINERALS & WASTE PLAN

Planning for a growing, changing Bristol also means planning for the sustainable management of waste, and planning for how mineral resource areas should be considered in relation to development.

These issues are currently governed by the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy and the Minerals policies in the Bristol Local Plan 2022-2040. Both documents will be out of force on adoption of the new Bristol Local Plan 2045, which is why we intend to produce a Bristol Minerals and Waste Plan. This will take place alongside the local plan-making process.

We will ask for your views on what should inform our vision for the future of mineral and waste planning in Bristol.

Thriving places

Bristol needs to accommodate significant change over the period to 2045. The city needs more homes, space for businesses and jobs, infrastructure and services, while also responding to inequalities, climate change and pressure on a limited supply of land. The challenge is not simply to accommodate growth, but to use growth to help create and sustain **thriving places**.

WHAT ARE 'THRIVING PLACES'?

Thriving places are places where people can live well, where communities can benefit from economic opportunity and regeneration, and where homes, jobs, services, public spaces and transport work together. They are places that can adapt to change, supporting people's health and wellbeing and responding to climate and ecological challenges. They make space for culture and creativity and support the use of both in responding to Bristol's stories and imagining its future.

For a tightly constrained city as Bristol, this has important implications for how land is used. Making efficient use of land, including through higher-density development where appropriate, will be essential. But density alone is not the objective. Higher-density urban living needs to provide homes, attractive and usable spaces, access to services and nature, sustainable ways to travel and opportunities for social and economic participation. Thriving places provide an overarching principle for the issues explored through this consultation.

- **Economic development** can help places thrive where growth creates opportunities that communities can access.
- **Housing growth** can support thriving neighbourhoods through different types and tenures, including affordable housing, creating inclusive and sustainable communities with safe, well-designed homes.
- **Transport** can connect people to opportunities and make neighbourhoods more accessible, safer and healthy.
- **Infrastructure** can give communities the services and facilities they need.
- **Climate action** and nature recovery can make places healthier and more resilient over the long term.
- **Design guidance** can help strengthen local character, better reveal the histories of our city, and ensure that new development can successfully accommodate the growing needs of Bristol.

The following sections explore how the local plan can influence each of these outcomes and, importantly, how they need to work together.

A growing and inclusive economy

Bristol is a key economic driver for the region, with office floorspace concentrated in the city centre, and large proportion of industrial floorspace located at Avonmouth and Bristol Port. There is also a significant hub of employment related to health and social care concentrated at Southmead with the hospital being a dominant employer. [The West of England Growth Strategy](#) identifies several Growth Zones in and around Bristol, including: the Central Bristol and Central Bath Zone, the West Innovation Arc and the Severn Estuary Growth Zone. These Growth Zones reflect the city's role in the regional economy and highlights key connections made across the city to centres of innovation and employment.

Bristol has a diverse and resilient economy with notable strengths in aerospace and advanced engineering, finance and insurance, information and communication, professional, scientific and technical activities, and creative and cultural industries. There are also growing specialisms in FinTech, Legal Tech, Quantum, Clean Tech and Energy, Health and Life Sciences, Food and Drink production. Digital and AI are also growing significantly, with Bristol Digital Futures and the Smart Internet Lab acting as key local cluster drivers. Alongside these sectors, Bristol's economy relies on a wide range of commercial, industrial and logistics activities, including light industry, urban manufacturing, warehousing, distribution and other local employment uses, which are essential to the functioning of a modern city economy and provide employment opportunities across a broad range of skills and occupations.

However, despite these successes the city faces challenges including high construction costs and limited opportunities for the identification of new land for the provision of workspace. The supply of land for industry and distribution use is especially constrained within central Bristol. There is also a perceived lack of shovel ready sites which has prevented some inward investment opportunities from coming forward. Such issues informed the employment land development strategy contained within the emerging local plan and are likely to require further consideration in the new local plan to 2045.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

The new local plan needs to set a clear and deliverable ambition for how Bristol's economy can continue to grow within a tightly constrained city. This means giving businesses and investors enough certainty about where growth can happen and how workspace will be provided, protected and renewed over time, while making the most efficient use of the scarce industrial and

commercial land the city has available. This could include considering the potential for temporary “meanwhile” uses within vacant premises within the city’s centres to encourage economic or community activity.

It also means considering who benefits from economic growth and regeneration. The location of employment, its relationship with neighbourhoods and transport networks, and the connection between development and local communities can all influence people’s ability to access economic opportunities. Thriving places depend on these relationships working well. Economic land should not be treated as a separate, standalone concern: decisions about workspace and regeneration need to connect with community wellbeing, housing growth, transport investment, infrastructure and Bristol’s climate goals.

The local plan will need to include a clear economic vision and strategy. This will have regard to the Industrial Strategy, the West of England Growth Strategy and the Bristol Economic Strategy 2025-2035 and be informed by an appropriate evidence base and consideration of the effectiveness of the economic development land strategy contained in the emerging local plan at providing workspace.

ENABLING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND THRIVING PLACES:

- Makes provision for the delivery of new workspace and reserves designated areas for industry, distribution and similar uses. This also includes port related and energy uses at Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port.
- Includes strategically significant regeneration areas for mixed use development such as Bristol Temple Quarter (which includes Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus), St Philip’s Marsh and the City Centre East (Frome Gateway and City Centre) Regeneration Programme.
- Has a focus on centres including the city centre for the development and renewal of commercial floorspace.
- Has an emphasis on the efficient use of land, and in respect of sites reserved for industry and related uses, this also includes the appropriate intensification of development on the site.

THE PROVISION OF WORKSPACE

The Local Plan 2045 will need to identify a requirement for a range of types and demands for office, industrial and distribution floorspace within Bristol to meet the future needs of the city’s economy. The identified needs for new workspace will be

informed by the West of England Employment Land Strategic Needs Assessment (ELSNA) which is being prepared as part of the baseline for understanding the level of need that the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the West of England needs to plan for. Preparation of the SDS is underway and it should give the spatial expression to strategic elements of the Growth Strategy (which identifies five priority growth sectors and five growth zones across the region including the Central Bristol & Bath Growth Zone). The SDS will identify broad locations for strategic development and support economic growth by providing a spatial framework for strategic investments.

Supporting health & wellbeing

Where people live and the places they experience everyday can have significant impact on their health and wellbeing. The location and design of development can influence whether people can walk or cycle easily; whether they have access to open space and nature; their exposure to air pollution, heat and flood risk; and whether neighbourhoods provide places for people to meet and interact. Whilst some areas make living healthy lives easier, in others, the built environment can limit wellbeing, contributing to wider health inequalities across the city.

The natural environment has a critical role to play in supporting people's physical and mental health. When we talk about growth, we also need to talk about growing our green and blue infrastructure, which can reduce the exposure to flood risk, provide shelter from extreme heat, and help mitigate poor air quality. This also means addressing the fact that access to green space for relaxation, socialising and sport is not even across the city. The relationship between health, climate resilience and nature recovery is considered in the Climate Action and Nature Recovery section.

Good health and wellbeing also depend on access to adequate healthcare facilities and community spaces, which must be planned for alongside new homes and workspaces. The role of the local plan in supporting this is considered further in the 'enabling thriving places: public Infrastructure and services' section.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

Planning cannot address all causes of ill health, but it can create opportunities for better health and help reduce the health inequalities that exist across Bristol. Looking at planning policies and development proposals through this lens will ensure that people's health is built into growth from the outset. Health and wellbeing should run through the local plan rather than being confined to a single set of policies, helping to shape the Transport, Climate, Infrastructure and other chapters. This creates environments that support wellbeing rather than placing additional pressures on those already experiencing poor health outcomes.

Our approach towards the design of new developments will therefore be informed by local public health strategies and evidence. Known health priorities in Bristol right now include addressing inequalities in good mental and physical wellbeing, improving access to healthy food and activities, reducing exposure to air pollutants, and building community resilience to the climate and ecological emergencies.

Homes for all: safe, healthy neighbourhoods

Local plans are required to set out the number of homes that they will plan for and provide detailed information on what sites these homes will be built on, and when. Delivering enough homes to meet needs is a well-known challenge for the city, as it is nationally. The homes that we provide through the Local Plan will have very close links to other priorities, particularly policies on design, urban living and density, and the delivery of supporting infrastructure.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

The new local plan needs to set out clear evidence on how many new homes can be accommodated in Bristol, and where, within a constrained city. This means having a clear understanding of the scale of need, where this growth can be best accommodated across the city, and ensuring that this provides affordable housing to the people who need it most.

The local plan is not just be about the number of homes, but about providing for the range of housing needs across Bristol's different communities and ensuring that new development helps create successful neighbourhoods and thriving places.

The overarching challenge is to deliver significantly more homes within a constrained urban area while balancing affordability, viability, infrastructure requirements, environmental objectives and the needs of different communities. Fundamentally, the new local plan is required because we need to increase the number of homes we plan for, but this also presents an opportunity to revisit our policy approaches to optimise delivery and affordability and ensure our design policies really champion the creation of good places to live at higher densities (which we call 'urban living'). It also presents the opportunity to check that our existing emerging policies will do enough to meet the needs of different groups, or whether there is new evidence, or options to allow us to improve upon our approach.

THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT (AND ROLE OF THE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY)

Alongside the preparation of the Bristol Local Plan, the regional Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the West of England is also underway. One of the key roles of the SDS is to assess the level housing need¹ across the region and then apportion an amount of this growth to each local authority, in a way that is aligned with the known capacity. This assessment will be set out in a key evidence document called the Local Housing Needs Assessment. This will set the number of homes that the Bristol Local Plan must plan for, the amount of affordable housing needed, as well as the accommodation needs for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It will also provide information on other type of homes we need to plan for. These evidence documents will set out the amount of different types of homes to plan for, but the local plan will determine where these homes will go.

As that work is currently ongoing, at this stage, we do not know the final housing figure the Council will be expected to plan for. The emerging status of the SDS cannot delay the production of Bristol's local plan. As the SDS and the Bristol Local Plan are being prepared concurrently, it is important that the housing needs apportioned to the city are established at an early stage, so our plan can take account of housing requirement.

HOUSING SUPPLY

As the Council anticipates that the Local Plan 2022-2040 will be adopted in Autumn 2026, we have a strong starting point for understanding where our housing supply will be coming from, and when, as evidenced by the SHLAA and the housing trajectory. This will be a key evidence document that will be updated with current information and assess new sites as part of the plan preparation.

A significant amount of our expected housing growth is located in the 'Areas of Growth and Regeneration', which are set out in detail in the emerging Local Plan (2040) and many areas are supported by approved frameworks or masterplans already. Due to the scale of development, they will take many years to be delivered in full. It is anticipated that these areas will continue to provide the strategic basis for the city's major growth in the new Local Plan 2045 too, but we will continue to explore ways to increase capacity and identify new sites for development.

¹ The starting point understanding how many homes we need to plan for is set by the government. It changes annually but for Bristol, this is currently around 2,962 homes a year. Over the new Local Plan period of 15 years, this would mean around 45,000 new homes. However, constraints and other factors, such as local affordability, and jobs growth, are then considered to justify a final housing figure (known as a housing requirement) to plan for, which could be more, or less.

ENCOURAGING HOUSING DELIVERY

We know that delivering housing is very hard in our city, as it is in many urban areas of the country. Rising construction costs, changes to building regulations, and the additional costs associated with brownfield development make the viability of development challenging. Equally, ensuring that new housing has the right supporting infrastructure which is delivered at the right time is vital. We think we should explore new policy opportunities to proactively address viability challenges, which vary for different types of housing and in different locations.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Enabling the delivery of affordable housing is a key priority for the Council and the local plan will need to take every opportunity to explore how the levels delivered can be increased at the right size and tenure. Affordable housing in Bristol is delivered through a range of mechanisms. A key source is developer contributions secured through Section 106 agreements, which require a proportion of homes within market-led developments to be provided as affordable housing in accordance with planning policy.

Affordable housing is also brought forward by Registered Providers (Housing Associations) and through direct Council development activity. Many schemes are supported by a blend of Section 106 contributions and public grant funding, including support from Homes England and Bristol City Council, enabling higher levels of affordable housing delivery and helping to address development viability challenges.

We know that affordable housing is significantly affected by the viability challenges described above, and we want to find ways to address this.

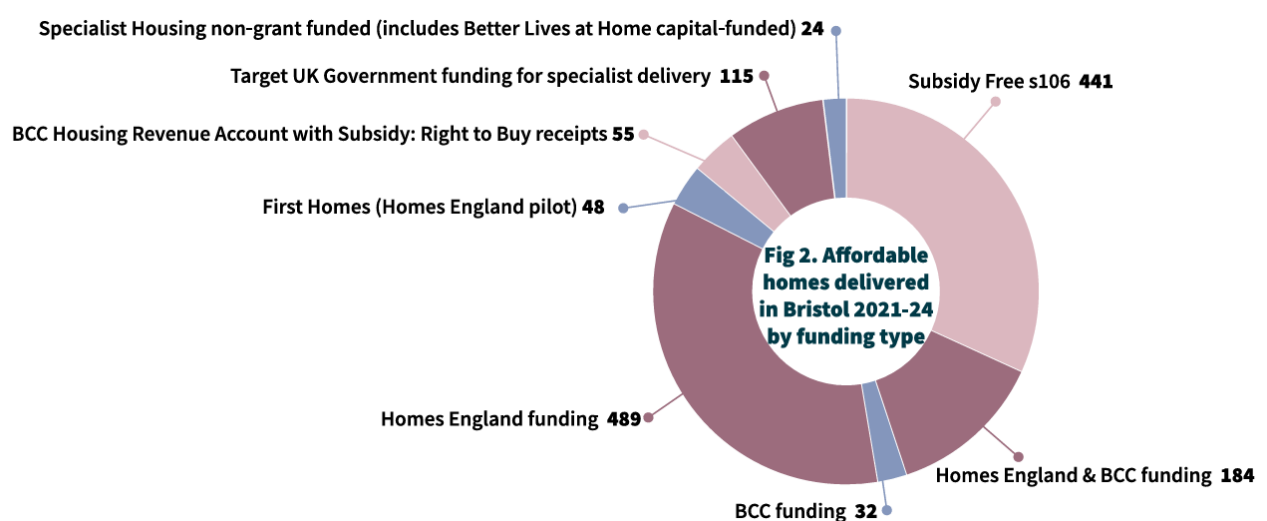


FIG.2 Affordable homes delivered in Bristol 2021-2024 by funding type (source: Bristol Interim Affordable housing delivery plan 2025-2027; Fig 2)

PROVIDING HOMES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE

We want to enhance and create mixed and balanced communities in our city. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) tells us that local plan policies should be made to address the housing needs of different groups, and these are defined as:

- Those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent)
- Older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes)
- Disabled people
- People who rent their homes
- Families with children
- Looked after children
- Specialist community-based accommodation
- Students
- Travellers
- People wishing to commission or build their own homes (self and custom build)

It is clear there are many groups of people who need specialist or alternative forms of housing. We need greater evidence on these needs, but we will take opportunities to develop policies and site allocations to provide more tailored housing solutions for specific groups and needs. As part of planning for the groups listed above, we think this will mean exploring our policy further approaches for:

- houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)
- purpose built houses and apartments to rent
- purpose built student accommodation
- 'co-living' rented homes
- visitor accommodation
- supported housing
- other non-traditional housing types (including houseboat dwellings)
- and building policies which are flexible enough to respond to emerging housing issues

These policies will help ensure that all types of accommodation provide the safe, healthy environments necessary to support their occupants' wellbeing.

MAKING THE BEST USE OF LAND

The government will expect us to accommodate growth within a tightly constrained city while balancing housing, employment, environmental and community needs. The land for these homes is often complex, (for instance, involving multiple landowners) and include costly brownfield sites. We think we should take **opportunities** to optimise the capacity within existing allocations and regeneration areas and aim to identify additional brownfield opportunities. Identifying appropriate **higher-density** development levels will be key to this, and the design will be crucial to making these homes good places to live.

However, the viability challenges facing urban areas has seen some development opportunities becoming less dense as the costs can be more manageable. We'll need to be creative with policy and decisions to balance density and deliverability to maintain a supply of new homes to meet the city's complex needs.

Density, Urban Living & Design

Accommodating the homes and other development Bristol needs within a constrained urban area will require the city to make an efficient use of land. This means assessing connectivity, context and infrastructure across the city to identify where higher densities will be appropriate.

The challenge is to make sure that higher density neighbourhoods are genuinely good to live in, and to ensure that growth strengthens rather than diminishes the qualities that enable neighbourhoods and communities to thrive. Higher density neighbourhoods can be thriving places that support local shops and services, enable access to employment, and encourage social interaction and active travel. These benefits depend on providing usable open space, vibrant and vital human environments at street level, appropriate infrastructure, a public realm that is safe and accessible for all, and consideration of how to enhance liveability at every stage.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

The new local plan needs to set standards for density across the city, alongside clear and confident expectations for what good density and good design look like. It needs to do this in the context of the new national policies on design and development management published as part of the [August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework](#). In combination this should bring greater coherence to guidance that is currently spread across multiple documents, giving communities and developers a clear understanding of what is expected. Above all, it should establish how higher-density living in Bristol can be genuinely good to live in and contribute to thriving neighbourhoods, while responding appropriately to the different contexts and characteristics of the city enough to meet the needs of different groups, or whether there is new evidence, or options to allow us to improve upon our approach.

DESIGN

Design policies ensure that the housing growth and density we need to plan for is delivered in a way that supports a high-quality of life for current and future residents. Design policies will guide how a place looks and feels and will shape how enjoyable, inclusive and accessible it is. This can range from the form and layout of a development to the materials used, the expectations for development to contribute to public art and culture, and the type and quality of green space provided. Through design, there are opportunities to address issues discussed elsewhere in this document, such as enhancing connectivity and walkability; improving the quality of

open spaces and increasing our resilience to climate change, all of which supports community health and wellbeing.

Communities have also been involved in shaping spatial frameworks that set out their design expectations for areas such as Bedminster and Frome Gateway. The new local plan is an opportunity to build on this work and integrate it into design priorities to be considered at the highest level. The Council will continue to prioritise community involvement in setting design standards and will look to explore mechanisms for doing so at both the plan-making and the development proposal level.

WHAT WILL BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN? A NATIONAL POLICY CHALLENGE: DESIGN POLICY UNDER THE NEW NPPF

National principles for urban design are set out in the new NPPF and the Design and Placemaking PPG. Whilst these serve as generic expectations, local authorities are encouraged to set their own standards for design, tailored to individual circumstances and contexts in a way that is consistent with the national principles. Bristol's urban living and density ambitions will depend on having design guidance in place that can illustrate how we expect new developments to respond to specific characters, constraints and opportunities in different areas of the city. The new local plan will need to consider how best to address this – for example, through locally specific design codes, guides and masterplans prepared alongside the plan, and by clearly evidencing why place specific design expectations are necessary to deliver good outcomes at the densities Bristol needs. This is an issue that will be explored further at the Proposed Content and Evidence stage.

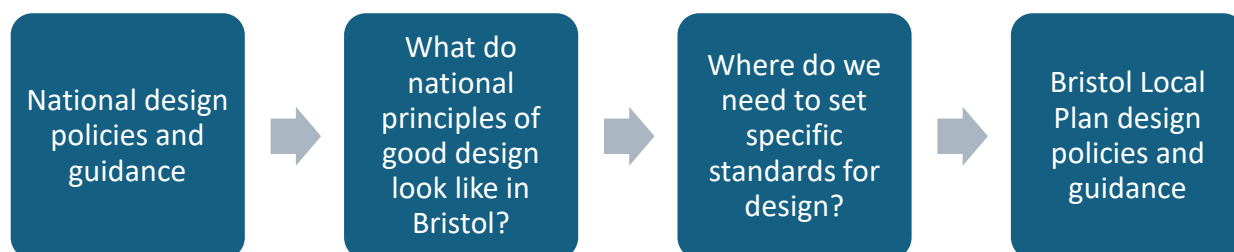


FIG.3 *How national policy and guidance translate into Bristol Local Plan's design policies*

HERITAGE

Bristol's heritage assets are part of what makes different areas of the city distinctive. Their conservation and enhancement will remain an important consideration in planning for future development. The challenge is to manage change in a way that recognises the significance of heritage assets while allowing places to continue to evolve and respond to current and future needs.

Heritage refers not just to listed buildings, but to how the city has been lived in and experienced over time. Whether bringing old buildings back into use, or redeveloping long-vacant land, heritage and meaning should be seen as an opportunity and not just a constraint – a chance to bring to light the city’s multiple and complex histories. Residents should, through public art and culture, have the chance to engage with Bristol’s stories, resulting in places that feel thoroughly grounded, inclusive, and inspiring.

Specific approaches to heritage assets, alterations, conservation and archaeology will be developed further as the plan progresses. Heritage and archaeological assets, and how to record and represent these, will form an important part of wider considerations of context and place, alongside liveability, accessibility, environmental performance, local character and the need to make effective use of land.

A better-connected Bristol: Easier, greener and safer movement

While the previous system for local plan preparation positioned transport evidence as justification for a preferred spatial strategy, the new system requires transport to be considered as one of the principal factors that will determine where growth goes in the first place. The vision-led approach to plan making expects transport, land use, infrastructure and place making to be considered together at the earliest stages of plan making.

This approach to transport in the local plan will focus on the distribution of local plan allocations in places which reflect the best possible accessibility, ensuring the roles of the site allocations and areas of growth are informed by transport connectivity, existing and proposed network capacity and infrastructure delivery. The local plan spatial strategy will therefore be one which can help to achieve Bristol's decarbonisation, health and wellbeing, and air quality goals, support public transport viability and contribute to walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure delivery.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN

The new local plan needs to ensure that decisions about where growth goes are made together with decisions about how people will actually travel – not as an afterthought once a spatial strategy has already been established. This means the plan should give confidence that the city's most accessible and well-connected locations are prioritised for growth, that the infrastructure needed to support that growth is delivered at the right time, and that the network as a whole is resilient enough to absorb the cumulative impact of new development without undermining Bristol's wider decarbonisation and air-quality ambitions.

At the strategic level, the Bristol Local Plan 2045 will focus on delivering a transport vision and achieving sustainable transport objectives for the city. This will be progressed in close collaboration with strategic transport planning for the West of England Spatial Development Strategy (SDS). The two processes will be closely aligned to ensure that evidence and emerging priorities are shared between them, supporting a consistent approach to transport and spatial planning across Bristol and wider region. This will be supported by identifying and safeguarding strategic transport infrastructure and facilities and supporting the funding and delivery of proposed and committed transport schemes. The local plan will also review the continued need for land previously safeguarded for transport infrastructure and

schemes, so that it accurately reflects the projects that are deliverable during the BLP2045 plan period.

At a local level, the plan will identify constraints within Bristol's existing transport networks, analysing patterns of accessibility across the city and infrastructure gaps for all modes of transport. Mapping these aspects will identify opportunities for achieving sustainable transport outcomes and effectively managing the cumulative impact of growth associated with the local plan.

The resilience of the existing highway networks (both the Local Road Network and Strategic Road Network) will be tested to identify the current constraints, such as congestion hot spots and junction capacity limitations. This will help identify where transport interventions may be required and ensure that local plan growth can be accommodated without resulting in unacceptable impacts on the operation and safety of the highway network.

Supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the plan will also be able to address local issues such as setting locally specific parking standards, define thresholds for what constitutes 'significant movement' (i.e., where the NPPF policies TR3 and TR6 will be triggered), establishing site-specific transport requirements for strategic site allocations and protecting important local transport corridors, routes and future transport infrastructure.

Accelerating Climate action and nature recovery

Worldwide production of greenhouse gas emissions has resulted in rising global temperatures and damage to the composition of the earth's atmosphere.

Temperatures have already risen by 1°C since pre-industrial temperatures, with associated impacts starting to come into effect, including extreme weather events, rainfall changes and sea level rises. Failure to take decisive action to tackle climate change, threatens a temperature increase of 2.6°C to 3.1°C over the course of this century.

More specifically, the West of England is up against climate associated risks including substantial flooding; extreme heat, particularly in dense urban areas experiencing the heat island effect; transport infrastructure vulnerability; and ecosystem stress due to sea-level rise and drought, which in turn risks loss of biodiversity and ecological systems that help reduce climate impacts. Bristol is at the forefront of the UK's climate response as the first UK city to declare a climate emergency in 2018, followed by the declaration of an ecological emergency in 2020.

Bristol has 86 local wildlife sites citywide, this includes 13 Local Nature Reserves, as well as a European designated Special Area of conservation, Avon Gorge Woodlands, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ashton Court Estate. These spaces are home to a number of rare trees and plants; their protection is important in maintaining biodiversity both regionally and nationally.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

The new local plan will need to contribute to both drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change that are already occurring and those which will likely occur in the future. This will require policies that support significant reduction in emissions across all areas and policies that protect and restore species and habitats, alongside measures that reduce Bristol's vulnerability to flooding, extreme heat and other climate impacts. Climate resilience is also fundamental to whether places can thrive over the long term. Houses, businesses, transport networks, infrastructure and public spaces all need to be capable of responding to changing climate. Nature and blue-green infrastructure can play an important role in the resilience while also supporting health, biodiversity and quality of place.

The local plan will seek to prevent the most catastrophic climate scenario from becoming a reality, whilst simultaneously adapting to effects of climate change already set in motion. Objectives will focus on achieving carbon neutrality, particularly related to buildings and vehicles emissions, and ensuring the city is appropriately prepared for the impacts of climate change, reducing future vulnerability to flooding and extreme heat, and the resultant physical and mental health impacts these can create. Nature recovery and an increase in biodiversity will also be priorities to reduce and adapt to climate change.

Establishing Bristol as a climate resilient and adapted city with thriving biodiversity will require a comprehensive approach across all priority areas within the local plan, guided by the regional Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) as it is developed by the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) alongside the local plan.

As preparation of the SDS continues, climate change mitigation and adaption, alongside habitat and nature recovery, are emerging as key themes of the strategy. The SDS will aim to ensure that net zero commitments are supported and uncertainties related to climate change are prepared for. It is also expected to build upon the MCA's existing Local Nature Recovery Strategy, incorporating and developing this work further at a strategic level.

Enabling thriving places: public infrastructure and services

Homes, jobs and neighbourhoods cannot function without the infrastructure and services that support everyday life. Infrastructure is the network of facilities, services, and systems that support the development, operation, sustainability, and wellbeing of places and communities.

This includes:

- physical infrastructure, such as water supply and sewerage systems, digital and telecommunications;
- social infrastructure, such as schools, universities, healthcare facilities and community spaces;
- green infrastructure, such as the harbour, brooks and rivers, parks and open spaces; and
- energy infrastructure, including renewable energy projects like solar, and wind, heat networks.

Bristol is a growing city; current projections estimate the population to exceed half a million by 2032, and over the last 20 years, 33,556 new homes have been provided, with an increase in floorspace for office, industry and warehousing, shops, and food and drink use. Infrastructure is critical to support this growth, and the local plan will ensure that development contributes towards necessary infrastructure, both on- and off-site (usually in the form of monies), and provide clarity for provision of infrastructure for sites allocated in the plan's policies.

Infrastructure supports all the outcomes considered in this consultation: housing delivery, employment growth and investment, carbon reduction and climate adaptation, and active travel and connectivity. It is important that infrastructure is considered from the beginning of the plan-making process, rather than once development allocations have already been determined. Infrastructure is not a separate consideration from other issues in the local plan; it is one of the fundamental conditions needed for places to thrive.

WHAT COULD BE IN THE NEW LOCAL PLAN?

The new local plan will focus on providing infrastructure for strategic allocations and key growth areas. The plan will be informed by an understanding of the availability of community facilities and public service infrastructure and plan for additional provision until 2045, accounting for local health needs and maximising opportunities to reduce inequalities. Land will be allocated for different purposes when appropriate and will set local standards for provision of different types of recreational land and facilities (for example, for play, sport, informal recreation and allotments).

Key challenges to planning for infrastructure include embedding climate resilience in all infrastructure provision, integrating transport and land use planning, creating a collaborative interface with healthcare and education providers; responding to capacity constraints in utilities and other networks and considering viability challenges associated with development in Bristol. Delivery will require collaboration with national providers (e.g. National Grid), statutory bodies (e.g. NHS Integrated Care Board), and wider Council teams (e.g. Education team).

Regional planning (through the SDS) will focus on strategic infrastructure and cover the provision and location of infrastructure across the West of England. The SDS will set out the type, extent and broad location of strategic infrastructure (including transport, social and waste infrastructure, utilities provision, flood risk management schemes, etc.) needed to enable development and serve existing communities.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT

We need to engage with statutory consultees and delivery partners in the provision of infrastructure in Bristol to support the growth planned for in the local plan. Partnerships are critical in the delivery of key infrastructure. For example, in large-scale renewable projects (the Bristol Heat Network, Castle Park Energy Centre, Avon Riversides 2100 and other wind, solar, low-carbon projects) are delivered through collaboration with community groups, regional public-sector partners and private partnerships.

Minerals and Waste

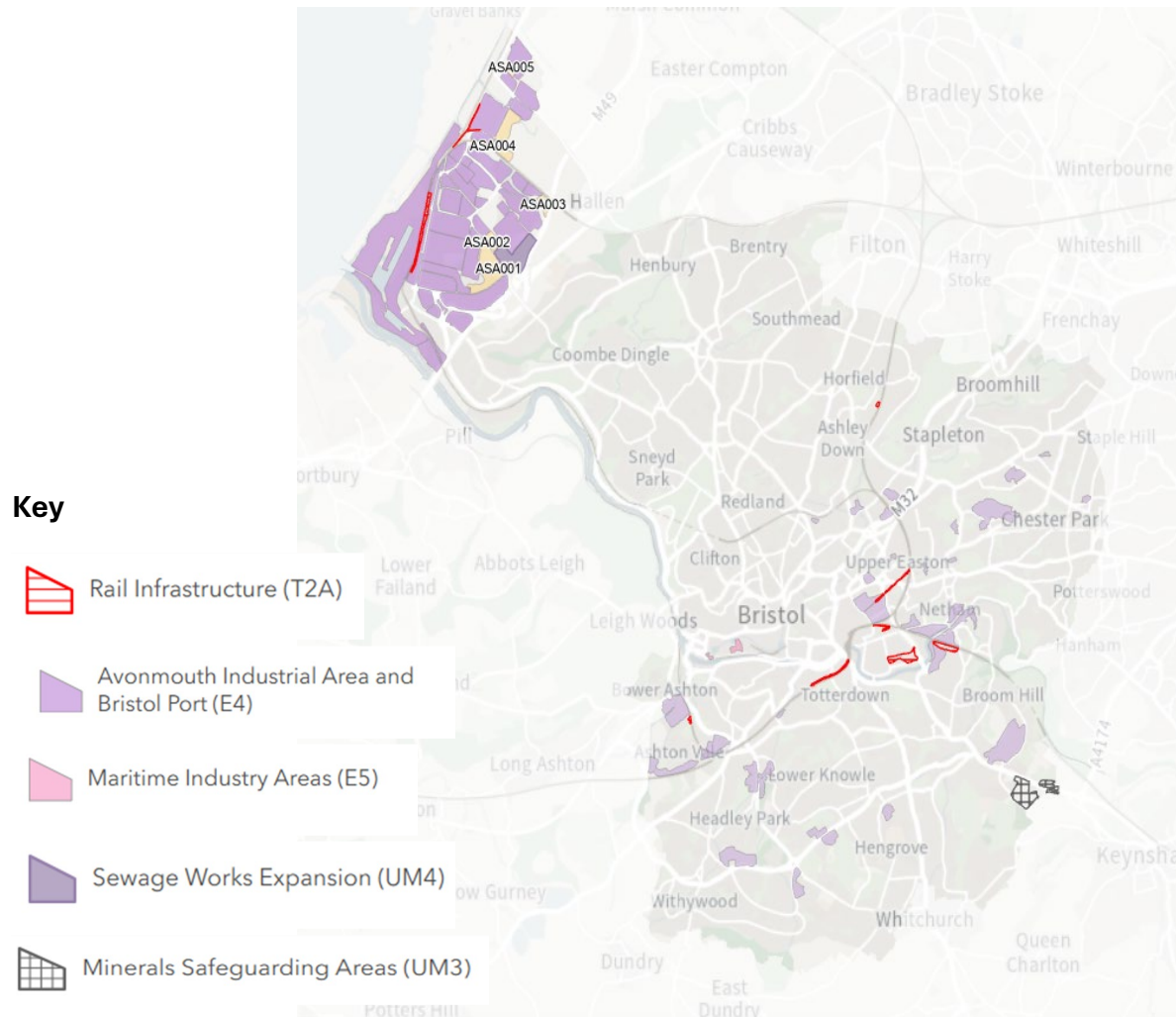


FIG.5 Map to show emerging Local Plan 2022-2040's designations relevant to Minerals and Waste with key

Bristol is preparing a new Minerals and Waste Plan which will guide minerals and waste development over the next 15-20 years.

Planning for minerals is important to ensure a steady and adequate supply, safeguard important infrastructure, and support construction and economic growth. Planning for waste is important to ensure the Council is managing waste sustainably

by supporting recycling and resource recovery and reducing reliance on landfill. Ultimately, these tie in with our climate change initiatives to work towards a net-zero Bristol, reduce transport and carbon emissions, and promote circular economy principles.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026 states that Minerals and Waste Plans should ‘set out specific proposals to facilitate a sufficient supply of minerals to meet society’s needs and enable the delivery of sustainable waste management and a circular economy’ and accord with the local plan and its provisions. Further, the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) should set a ‘positive vision for future growth and change at a sub-regional scale and provide a clear spatial framework for investment and growth’.

WASTE

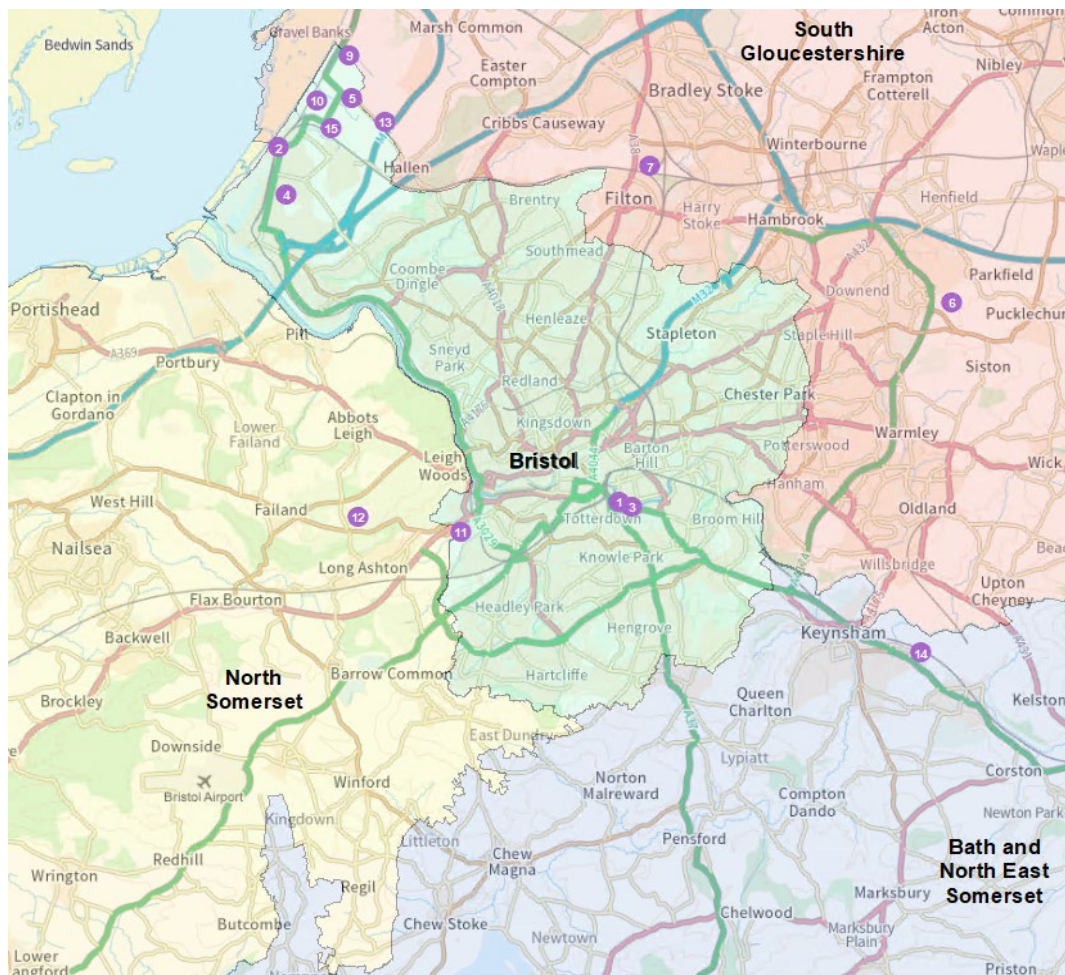


FIG.6 Map to show existing waste facilities in South-West

Avonmouth functions as a regional waste management hub.

Bristol's current waste facilities include 11 sites, dealing with recycling, recovery, and transfer of waste:

- three are 'Transfer stations', five are 'Recycling' sites (including one Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT), and one not in operation) and two are 'Recycling and Recovery' sites
- total combined capacity of 1,965tpa (excluding non-operational site)

Neighbouring authorities' waste facilities include a transfer station / recycling, non-hazardous landfill and inert landfill sites.

MINERALS

Bristol has limited indigenous mineral resources and is a major importer of aggregates through Avonmouth. Bristol contributes to aggregates supply through marine dredged sand and gravel landed at Avonmouth, and from recycled aggregate. The mineral rights for marine sand and gravel are owned by the Crown Estate, and Avonmouth receives all its dredged marine aggregate from the Crown Estate's 'South West' region in the Bristol Channel. There is evidence that permitted capacity exceeds demand of licenced primary marine aggregate. There are no active quarries producing aggregates in Bristol, and secondary aggregate is largely produced from incinerator bottom ash by a firm in Avonmouth.

The plan is likely to focus on safeguarding wharf capacity for marine aggregates, maintaining processing capacity for recycled aggregates, and safeguarding rail infrastructure for movement of aggregates.

Summary

The aspects of the local plan explored through this consultation are closely connected. Bristol needs more homes, but those homes need to be supported by transport, infrastructure, services and good quality places. The city needs to provide space for jobs and economic growth, but communities need to be able to access and benefit from those opportunities. Making more efficient use of land can support housing and economic growth, but higher density development needs to provide a high quality of life. The way the city grows also needs to reduce carbon emissions, respond to climate risks and make space for nature.

These relationships will become increasingly important as the local plan develops. The next stage of plan making will need to move from identifying these issues to considering the choices involved: where growth should take place, what different locations can accommodate, what infrastructure is required and what policy approaches will produce the best outcomes.

The overarching aim is to use planning in a positive way: not simply to accommodate development, but to help create and sustain thriving places across Bristol – places where people can live well, access opportunities and services, move around safely and sustainably, and be resilient to future social, economic and environmental change.

Appendix 1

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026

Regulation 2 'Interpretation'