



Bristol City Council

Local Plan Review

April 2024

Development Allocations and Designations

Process Topic paper



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Allocations

Introduction

1.1 Policy DA1: Proposed development allocations and the accompanying Annex – Development Allocations has been prepared as part of the Local Plan.

1.2 Policy DA1 allocates sites across the city for development for particular land uses. It also includes those site allocations retained from the adopted Bristol Local Plan, which includes the Site Allocations and Development Management Development Policies (July 2014), and the Bristol Central Area Plan (March 2015).

1.3 Policy DA1 allocates sites outside the areas of growth and regeneration set out in the Bristol Local Plan Publication Version (November 2023). The proposed development allocations across the city are accompanied by Policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port which includes a further series of allocations for development of industrial and distribution uses at Avonmouth. A number of sites have already been allocated for development in Neighbourhood Plans.

1.4 This document addresses the process of allocating sites for particular uses, with estimated housing capacities where relevant.

Initial identification of sites

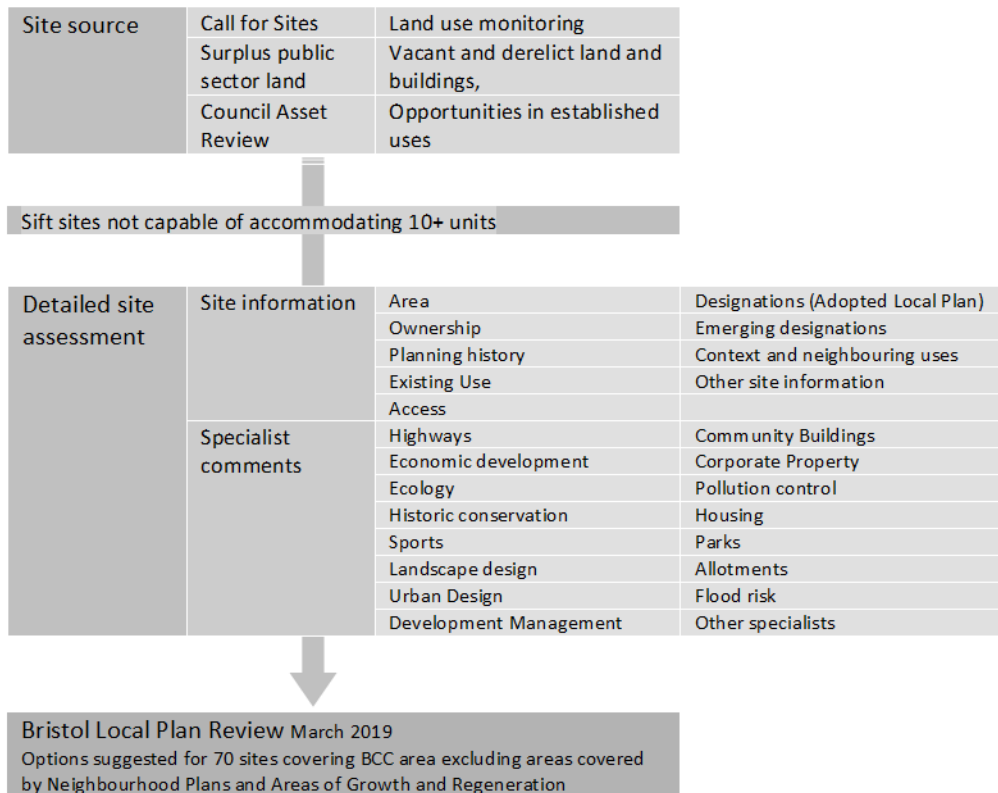
1.5 Sites were identified through a number of different methods including:

- a call for sites,
- a review of the council's assets,
- land use monitoring,
- surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land (from National Register of Public Sector Land or Public Sector Strategies),
- vacant and derelict land and buildings,
- additional opportunities in established uses (e.g. making productive use of under-utilised facilities such as garage blocks).

1.6 A diagram showing the site selection process for the Bristol Local Plan Review - Consultation 2019 is shown in table 1 below. 70 draft development allocations were included in the Bristol Local Plan Review – Draft Policies and Development Allocations March 2019 Consultation.

1.7 A 'Call for Sites' was issued in February 2018 in addition to earlier Call for Sites in March 2017 and January 2015 to support other plan making activities within the city. Their purpose was to provide an opportunity for individuals and organisations to suggest land or buildings for possible inclusion as development allocations in the Bristol Local Plan.

Table 1



1.8 An initial sift removed sites that were not large enough to accommodate 10+ dwellings.

1.9 The sites were assessed in detail. This involved assessing the sites against the policies of the then emerging Local Plan; other designations, proximity to services / facilities, planning history, existing use of the land, details of access and topography, prominence of the site; and site context including the use of neighbouring land.

1.10 Internal liaison was undertaken with numerous internal specialists including, Development Management officers, ecologists, transport colleagues, community buildings officer, economic regeneration officers, urban designers, conservation officers, archaeologists and flood risk engineers.

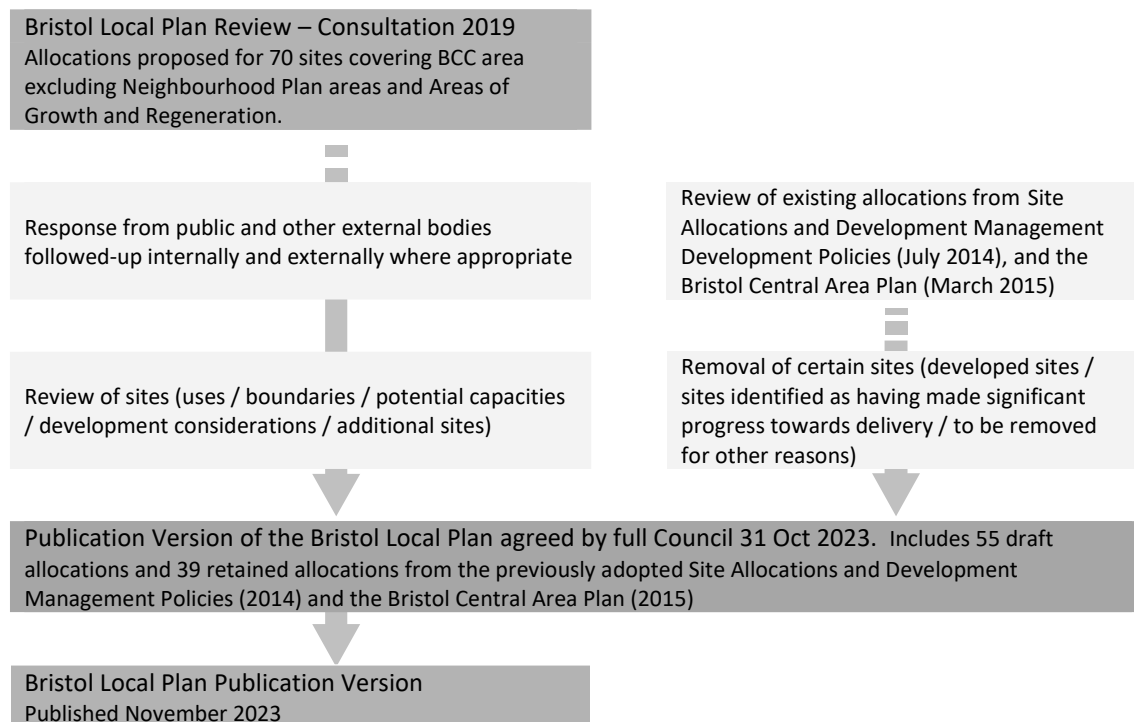
2019 Consultation

1.11 The assessment above resulted in the production of development allocation sites which were accompanied by a proposed allocation and development considerations, for inclusion in the 'Bristol Local Plan Review: Draft Policies and Development Allocations – Consultation' document. Comments were sought for nine weeks between 18th March and 17th May 2019.

1.12 A total of 345 comments were received on 52 proposed development allocations, 18 receiving no comment. In addition, 7 comments relating to all proposed allocations were received and 1 comment was received on an existing allocation.

1.13 The comments made fed into the Publication Version. A diagram showing the progress of the allocations from the 2019 consultation culminating in the Publication Version is shown in table 2.

Table 2



2023 Publication Version

1.14 The housing capacities as set out in the annex are an estimate based on achieving an efficient use of land. They do not represent a maximum number of homes. If the capacity indicated is not possible due to site considerations, a lower number than the one stated would be appropriate. Where an allocation is for mixed-use development, the mix of uses may also change the estimated capacity.

1.15 A full review of all the draft development allocations and associated development considerations was undertaken following the 2019 consultation, utilising the comments received. Issues raised were followed up with relevant internal or external bodies where appropriate. In some instances development considerations have been revised or added to address issues raised, such as the requirement to retain and integrate specific important green infrastructure. In other cases the uses proposed have been revised, for instance to include residential compatible workspace in suitable locations where housing allocations are proposed on existing employment sites. Additional sites suggested through the consultation or submitted through the ongoing Call for Sites were also assessed for potential allocation in the publication version of the document.

Environment Agency

1.16 The Environment Agency responded to the 2019 consultation with detailed comments on a number of sites and as a result some proposed development considerations have been revised, or added; for instance, to include the requirement for site development

in lower risk areas, or to introduce an 8m buffer adjacent to a main river to allow access. Three sites were also removed due to unresolved flood risk issues.

Development strategy policy designations

2.1 Most residential and mixed used development which the local plan directly facilitates will be within the development strategy areas identified in the development strategy chapter.

2.2 The development strategy sets out a direction for each part of the city and identifies specific locations for change and development. These include areas of growth and regeneration at:

- DS1: Bristol City Centre
- DS1A: Bristol City Centre – Broadmead, Castle Park and the Old City
- DS2: Bristol Temple Quarter
- DS3: St. Philip’s Marsh
- DS4: Western Harbour
- DS5: Frome Gateway
- DS6: Lawrence Hill
- DS7: Central Fishponds
- DS8: Central Bedminster
- DS9: Brislington
- DS13: Lockleaze
- DS14: Central Southmead

2.3 These areas represent in various ways focussed opportunities for making more effective use of land enabling the delivery of new homes, mixed uses and supporting development. The specific approach to each area is set out within the local plan in the relevant area policy and its supporting text.

2.4 The development strategy also identifies areas for residential development and a new neighbourhood which result from proposed changes to the Green Belt in response to exceptional circumstances (NPPF September 2023 paragraphs 140 and 141). These are:

- Policy DS11: Development allocations – south west Bristol
- Policy DS12: New neighbourhood – Bath Road, Brislington

2.5 Policy DS10 refers to the Green Belt and is discussed below. For the purposes of the publication version, the policy identifies that the local plan is proposing three areas will be removed from the Green Belt as designated in the current local plan.

Other policy designations

Safeguarded Transport Links, Safeguarded Park & Ride Sites, Rail Infrastructure

Policy T2A: Protected transport and movement routes

3.1 Policy T2A: Protected transport and movement routes states that land required for the implementation of potential transport infrastructure and movement routes will be safeguarded to enable their future provision. These proposals and facilities are shown on the Policies Map. They include some identified in the current local plan as well as new proposals contained within the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 transport programme and were established in collaboration with BCC Transport officers.

3.2 The protected areas shown on the Policies Map constitute sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice within a growing and developing city. The areas protected from development are the minimum necessary to ensure routes can accommodate future improvements which may be necessary. Rail sites with the potential for continued, intensified or future use are also safeguarded.

3.3 Transport depots are not specifically identified on the Policies Map. They can be identified by their existing use. Other policies in the plan refer to depots which are expected to be retained.

Centres, Primary Shopping Areas

Policy SSE1: Supporting Bristol's Centres – network and hierarchy

3.4 Policy SSE1: Supporting Bristol's Centres – network and hierarchy, identifies the hierarchy of centres across the city from Bristol City Centre which will remain the principal destination for shopping and leisure in the city and serve as the regional centre; to town, district and local centres and parades. Further detailed policy in respect of the role of centres, and the approach to development in the primary shopping areas is provided in Policy SSE2 'Development in Bristol's centres' and Policy SSE4: Town centre first approach to development. These policies were consulted on in November 2022 as were the proposed boundaries for local centres and parades. The designations were reviewed in light of the responses received.

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

Policy BG2: Nature conservation and recovery

3.5 National planning policy requires that local plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of sites (international, European, national and locally designated), and promote the conservation and restoration of priority habitats ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of priority species.

3.6 Policy BG2: Nature conservation and recovery identifies the hierarchy of sites designated for nature conservation, which aims to ensure that the most valuable ecological habitats and species are appropriately protected in relation to the features for which they are designated. It also states that development which would have a significantly harmful impact on local wildlife sites, known as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, will not be permitted. SNCIs are identified for their scientific, educational, research, historical or visual landscape importance.

3.7 The Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan was used to guide decisions on the designation of land for nature conservation purposes.

3.8 The site allocation BSA1305: Land to the north-west of Vale Lane, Bedminster Down was allocated within an area that is designated as an SNCI as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan (2014). The extent to which the development of the site contributed to the achievement of wider objectives of the Local Plan was carefully considered at the time of the original allocation, as was the prospect of mitigating negative impacts. The allocation of the site was considered to offer greater benefits and development considerations were added in consultation with council ecologists in order to mitigate the effects on ecology where possible. This allocation is proposed to be retained.

Regionally Important Geological Sites

Policy BG2: Nature conservation and recovery

3.9 National planning policy requires that local plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of sites (international, European, national and locally designated), and promote the conservation, restoration of priority habitats ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species. 'Local Geological Sites', known as Regionally Important Geological Sites, are identified for their scientific, educational, research, historical or visual landscape importance.

3.10 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) are designated by locally developed criteria and are currently the most important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

3.11 Sites of national importance are designated as SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), a status that offers greater legal protection. A site may be a both a RIGS and an SSSI (for instance, the Avon Gorge).

Local Historic Parks and Gardens

Policy CHE1: Conservation and the historic environment

3.12 Local Historic Parks and Gardens are designed landscapes, which are of special historical interest because of their layout, features and architectural ornament. Locally listed historic parks and gardens are designated on the Policies Map. These are considered to be non-designated heritage assets that would in future form part of a Local List and are therefore subject to policy CHE1.

Green Belt

Policy DS10: The Green Belt, Policy DS11: Development allocations – south west Bristol, Policy DS12: New neighbourhood – Bath Road, Brislington

3.13 Policy DS10 retains the Green Belt areas within Bristol with boundaries revised to reflect exceptional circumstances.

3.14 A key characteristic of the Green Belt is its openness and all remaining areas contribute to meeting the purposes of designation. In several locations, including Ashton Court, the slopes at Dundry, Stockwood and the Avon Valley, Green Belt land also forms very prominent elements of the city's landscape setting, extending into the Green Belt areas of neighbouring authorities. In Stapleton part of the Green Belt extends along the M32 Motorway. This is part of larger wedge of Green Belt stretching out into South Gloucestershire.

3.15 The Green Belt, subject to its proposed boundary revisions, continues to play a strategic role in containing the outward expansion of Bristol, providing a green setting for the city and focusing attention upon the regeneration of previously developed land in the urban area. As such the Green Belt with a revised boundary is retained in the Local Plan Review.

3.16 The Green Belt including proposed boundary revisions was consulted on in 2019. The responses received informed the 2022 consultation which included a proposal to retain land at Yew Tree Farm within the Green Belt, removing the proposed development allocation on the land. This position is carried forward into the submission version of the Local Plan.

3.17 The approach to the Green Belt was supported by evidence set out in the West of England Combined Authority Strategic Green Belt Assessment (September 2022).

Removal of land from with existing Green Belt

3.18 The local plan publication version proposes in accordance with the exceptional circumstances provisions of the NPPF September 2023 (paragraphs 140 and 141) three areas of Green Belt amendment which will enable residential development. The amendments will support the delivery of new homes which contribute to meeting identified needs, consistent with meeting the housing requirement set out in Policy H1. The West of England Combined Authority Strategic Green Belt Assessment has been used to assist in consideration of the nature and extent of harm to the Green Belt which would arise from these amendments and the extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt can be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent:

- Land at Ashton Vale: The West of England Combined Authority Strategic Green Belt Assessment notes that parcel 96 in which the site is located variously makes weak, moderate or significant contributions to one of the five purposes of Green Belt set out in national planning policy. The assessment explains (page LUC I B-291) that the part of the parcel adjacent to Ashton Vale has a stronger relationship with adjacent urban edges to the north, east and south and says the land lacks landform variation and strong boundaries, with adjacent large scale commercial development having an urbanising visual influence. It concludes that land in this location makes a weaker

contribution to Green Belt Purposes 1, 3 and 4 and that a road and hedgerow form a boundary to this area, coinciding with the district boundary, that would not represent a significant weakening of adjacent Green Belt land in North Somerset.

Planning permission (ref. 21/03166/P) has been granted on this site for around 500 homes in a development known as 'Longmoor'.

- Land adjacent to Elsbert Drive, Bishopsworth: This site is also located within Green Belt Assessment parcel 96. The assessment notes (page LUC I B-291) that this part of the parcel has a more moderate distinction from the urban area, which means that it makes a less significant contribution to Purpose 3 than the Bedminster Down area to the north. It concludes that release of land here within the Bristol City Council boundary would not in isolation be strategic in scale, and would cause a knock-on weakening of adjacent land in North Somerset, but the A4174 would form a strong boundary to a release that encompassed land in both districts.

The emerging North Somerset local plan proposes to release Green Belt land to the west of this site and east of Colliters Way. (Policy LP6: Extent of the Green Belt, North Somerset Local Plan 2039 Pre-submission plan.)

- New neighbourhood – Bath Road, Brislington: This site is located within Green Belt Assessment parcel 78. The parcel is considered as a whole to make a significant contribution to the purposes of Green Belt. However, to the south of the A4, the Brislington Park and Ride is noted (page LUC I B-235) as an urbanising influence that diminishes the openness of the Green Belt. In this part of the parcel the assessment notes that fields to the east of this have well-treed boundaries which retain some distinction from the urban area, but also have similar strength outer boundaries that would limit the impact on the distinction of adjacent Green Belt land.

The existing Bristol Core Strategy indicates land at southeast Bristol as a long-term contingency for development of new homes (Policy BCS5 and key diagram).

The emerging Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan is considering release of land from the Green Belt to the east. (Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan 2022-2024).

Sewage Works Expansion

Policy UM4: Sewage Treatment Works

3.19 A need for future expansion of the sewage works at Kingsweston Lane has been identified. This policy safeguards an area on which such expansion could potentially take place. A similar area was safeguarded for the extension of the sewage treatment works in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014).

3.20 The safeguarding zone allows for future expansion. However, any necessary permissions will still need to be sought should expansion proposals come forward. These should provide appropriate flood resilience and mitigation measures as set out in policy FR1 'Flood risk and water management'.

Minerals Safeguarding Areas

Policy UM3: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

3.21 The Coal Authority, as the owner of coal seams and mine workings on behalf of the state, has published mapped data for Bristol showing Surface Mining Coal Resource Area. Within these areas the Coal Authority seeks consideration of the extraction of surface coal resources prior to development taking place, in order to prevent unnecessary sterilisation of the resource.

3.22 Minerals Safeguarding Areas provide for the safeguarding of proven mineral resources which are, or may become, of economic importance from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development. Minerals Safeguarding Areas are identified for land at south east Bristol related to the surface coal deposits identified in that area. There is no presumption that land within the Minerals Safeguarding Areas will ultimately be allocated for extraction.

3.23 Although there are identified surface coal deposits on the east side of Bristol and a smaller deposit in the south west, these occur within intensively built-up areas of the city, with most residual undeveloped sites already allocated for further development. As a consequence, most of the opportunities for surface coal extraction will already be sterilised or constrained by the close proximity of sites to sensitive urban environments. These areas are not, therefore, identified as Minerals Safeguarding Areas.

Green Links

Policy BG7: The St. Paul's green link

3.24 A potential to improve green links in the St. Paul's/M32 area has been identified in Policy BG7. The St. Paul's area contains a number of open spaces that form a rough west/east axis across the area from Brunswick Square to St. Agnes' Park, with onward links towards St. Werburgh's. An opportunity exists to improve and 'green' linkages between these assets and to provide improved pedestrian/cycle links over the M32 to form stronger connections with the Frome Gateway regeneration area. The extent of this link is shown on the Policies map which was established by the Bristol Central Area Local Plan 2015.

Quayside Walkways (Existing) and Quayside Walkways (Proposed)

Policy BG5: Biodiversity and access to Bristol's waterways

3.25 Policy BG5 states that development on or adjacent to the existing quayside walkways shown on the Policies Map will be expected to retain and, where appropriate, enhance a continuous and publicly accessible route. This policy was consulted upon in 2022 and was established by the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy – Adopted June 2011 and the Bristol Central Area Local Plan 2015.

Hallen Marsh Habitat Mitigation

Policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port

3.26 Land at Hallen Marsh is reserved for habitat mitigation by policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port. Development in the area covered by Policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port will be expected to contribute appropriately towards the

habitat mitigation measures proposed for this area. The policy, including the extent of the habitat mitigation designation was consulted on in 2019.

Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port

Policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port

3.27 The approach to existing industrial areas is an evolution of the 2011 local plan which allows for the regeneration and renewal of the existing industrial sites. This strategy has seen new forms of business space replacing older industries helping to create a dynamic economic area. The designation was included in the 2019 Consultation (Policy E5) and reviewed in light of the responses received.

Avonmouth Site Allocations

Policy E4: Avonmouth Industrial Area and Bristol Port

3.28 The allocation of new, currently undeveloped sites for industrial and distribution uses within Avonmouth can help to support continued growth. Avonmouth Site Allocations were included in the 2019 Consultation (Policy E5) and reviewed in light of the responses received.

Industry and Distribution Areas

Policy E5: Industry and Distribution Areas

3.29 Along with the Avonmouth and Bristol Port area (640 hectares), the Industry and Distribution Areas (237 hectares) represent Bristol's core provision of industrial and distribution land. Due to their strategic economic importance this policy reserves these areas for industrial, distribution and related uses in order to support a diverse and inclusive economy.

3.30 Most of these areas are of strategic scale and cater for the requirements of all sizes of industrial and distribution businesses. In order to maintain opportunities for small and medium sized industrial and distribution businesses, a number of small industrial estates with smaller scale units have also been identified in this policy. Industry and Distribution Areas were included in the 2019 Consultation (Policy E4) and reviewed in light of the responses received.

Maritime Industry Area

Policy E5: Industry and Distribution Areas

3.31 Sites within the Maritime Industry Areas shown on the Policies Map will be retained for industrial and warehousing uses and development will be expected to protect or enhance the maritime function of the area. The 2019 consultation made provision for the retention of the maritime industry area at the historic Underfall Yard as a part of Draft Policy DS4: Western Harbour. At this time it was also proposed to retain Policy BCAP8 'Maritime industries' which in addition designated Albion Docks/Sydney Row. The approach was reviewed in light of the responses received and Maritime Industry Areas have now been incorporated within Policy E5.

Local Green Space

Policy GI1: Local Green Space

3.32 An explanation of this designation is included in the Local Green Space and Reserved Open Green Space - Topic Paper (November 2023).

Reserved Open Green Space

Policy GI2: Reserved Open Green Space

3.33 An explanation of this designation is included in the Local Green Space and Reserved Open Green Space - Topic Paper (November 2023).

Stapleton Allotments and Holdings

Policy GI4: Stapleton allotments and holdings – food growing Local Green Space

3.34 An explanation of this designation is included in the Local Green Space and Reserved Open Green Space - Topic Paper (November 2023).

Flood Defence Policy Area

Policy FR2: Bristol Avon Flood Strategy

3.35 The designation reflects the areas that are essential for the delivery of future flood defences and is consistent with the Bristol Avon Flood Strategy.